

K.D. Sullivan

# A Cure for the Common

# WORD

Remedy Your  
Ailing Vocabulary  
with 3,000+  
Vibrant Alternatives  
to the Most  
Overused Words

# A Cure for the Common **WORD**

K.D. Sullivan



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# Professional



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# Introduction

I'm reading a very interesting book.

Can you tell from the preceding sentence exactly what I mean by *interesting*? Not really. But what if I say, "I'm reading a very *helpful* book" or "I'm reading a very *comprehensive* book"? By changing just one word in this sentence to a more specific word, I convey a different meaning and give you more information about what I want to say. That's the goal of *A Cure for the Common Word*—to help you learn to more precisely convey your intended meaning when you write and when you speak.

Many of us tend to use the same words over and over. Even though it is estimated that the average person knows more than twenty thousand words, he or she uses only about 10 percent of those in daily life. Often it's out of habit or because it's easier to use the same old words, but sometimes it's because we don't fully understand the nuance of some alternative words or when it might be appropriate—and more powerful—to use them.

Granted, sometimes a vague or ambiguous word is just what you want—for example, when you are being discreet or want to leave your words open to interpretation. For example, if friends set you up on a less-than-stellar blind date, you can gracefully get out of giving a negative opinion by vaguely describing your date as a "nice" guy.

If you do want to be specific, then by expanding your repertoire of words, when you write and speak you will be able to use the most precise word for your meaning, not just the first word that comes to mind. And by using these more precise words, you will be able to communicate *exactly* what you mean and will do so in a quick and concise manner.

Using the same example of our blind date—and assuming this time that the date with Rich was a positive one—see what happens when we use different alternatives for our "nice" guy?

## 2 Introduction

**Rich has a nice personality.**

Substitute an alternative remedy for *nice*:

**Rich has a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ personality.**

<b>cordial</b>	Rich is warm, sincere, and friendly.
<b>cultured</b>	Rich is refined in his manner and enlightened and knowledgeable in the arts.
<b>gentle</b>	Rich is never severe or harsh in any way.
<b>gracious</b>	Rich is kind and courteous and has a compassionate nature.

*A Cure for the Common Word* is for anyone from middle-school age to adult, for those who write and speak in their profession and those eager to improve their vocabulary to be more effective in what they say.

For example, did you know that in the preceding sentence, *eager* is exactly the right word, rather than *anxious*, which many people would have used? That's because *eager* means having or showing keen interest or intense desire, whereas *anxious* means uneasy and apprehensive about an uncertain event.

## How to Use This Book

This book includes one hundred of the most commonly overused words in the English language, based on research from several sources. Because these common words can often be vague, limiting, or confusing in a sentence, we'll show you how choosing specific alternatives to these common words helps you to more precisely convey your intended meaning.

Before we describe the elements of this book, let's take a brief look at the definitions of a few terms used throughout the book:

**connotation**—the associated or secondary meaning of a word or an expression in addition to its explicit or primary meaning



**definition**—a statement of the meaning of a word, phrase, or term, as in a dictionary entry

**impression**—a strong effect produced on the intellect, feelings, conscience, etc.

**meaning**—what is intended to be, or actually is, expressed or indicated

**nuance**—a subtle difference or distinction in expression, meaning, response, etc.

Each of these refers to going beyond the definition of a word, to the subtleties of what you mean—or what is perceived.

Now a guide to help you with the symptoms of and cures for the common words in this book.

A number of elements are associated with each of the one hundred common words in this book. The following descriptions will help you gain the most use of the alternatives offered in this book.

On each left-hand page, you'll see

- **The common word.** Be alert because of the one hundred common words, a few are the same word in spelling but not in definition. You're not seeing double.
- **The common word's part of speech.**
- **A brief definition or definitions of the common word.** Some common words are given only one definition, but other common words can be defined more than one way, all similar in nature.
- **Seven alternatives to the common word.** The meanings of these will all appear on the right-hand page.
- **A more thorough list of alternatives for the common word.** Though this list may not include all synonyms, we've listed the most relevant and/or powerful alternatives. A traditional thesaurus—in print or online—may list more words in all their forms, including their parts of speech.
- **And for fun, a famous quote.** The quote gives an example in which one of the alternatives was just the right word—the precise cure for what the speaker wanted to say.

## 4 Introduction

On each right-hand page, you'll find

- **The diagnosis.** Each of the common words has some symptoms that need a cure. The diagnosis of the problem will be *vague*, *limiting*, or *confusing*.
- **A sentence using the common word.** Think of this as our "patient." Here's where you'll see how the common word may not convey clearly what you want to say (vague), doesn't say enough of what you'd like to convey (limiting), or could have different meanings (confusing).
- **The sentence's meaning.** Here are the "symptoms" of the common word—what the sentence means as written and how using the common word may keep us from understanding what's truly meant.
- **Expanded alternatives and meanings.** These "remedies" to our diagnosis are just a few of the many options you can choose from to highlight a primary point you want to make or a meaning you want to imply. Note that these alternative meanings and explanations are not definitions. Some alternatives are very similar and offer only slight nuances—subtle connotations or implications that evoke slightly different feelings or perceptions of what's meant. Others show how changing the word can dramatically change the actual meaning of the sentence. So look for key words to differentiate the implications of using each alternative.
- **A second quote.** Another fun, inspirational, or witty quote illustrates how choosing one of the alternative words gives a sentence—or sentiment—power and precise meaning.

## A Wealth of Words

Because English has welcomed influences from so many other languages, you have a wealth of word choices to consider. Here are a few statistics you may not be aware of:

- The English language consists of more than a million words, if you include technical and scientific terms.

- The *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*, Second Edition, contains approximately 291,500 main entries with a total of more than 600,000 definitions, and *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Eleventh Edition, contains approximately 25,000 main entries and more than 400,000 definitions!
- Experts estimate that the average educated person knows about 20,000 words and uses about 2,000 in a week.

It's actually pretty great that we have so many ways to express ourselves, and it can be fun discovering and using just the right word to say so precisely/exactly/perfectly/ideally/eloquently what we want to say/express/convey/write/communicate.

One of the very best ways that you can improve your vocabulary and develop your writing and speaking skills is to read, read, read. As you do, be aware of how effective writers present their ideas in ways that enable you to know and feel exactly what they're saying, as if you're right in the middle of the action.

I hope that the examples and alternatives to the common words in this book give you a great deal of information of what's possible. And I hope that this is a springboard for you to try new words, not only with the common overused words in this book, but in all your writing and speaking.

This book is for all those who are eternally curious, who have a joy in learning, and who ask and seek when they don't know.

Have fun!

# absolutely

PART OF SPEECH *adverb*

DEFINITION *positively; certainly; having no restriction, exception, or qualification*



## cures for the common word

actually  
categorically  
completely  
**conclusively**  
**consummately**  
**decidedly**  
decisively  
def  
definitely  
doubtless

**easily**  
entirely  
exactly  
**fully**  
ideally  
positively  
**precisely**  
purely  
really  
right on

straight out  
sure enough  
surely  
thoroughly  
truly  
unambiguously  
**unconditionally**  
unquestionably  
utterly  
wholly

## CURED!

Frodo: "You're late." Gandalf: "A wizard is never late, Frodo Baggins. Nor is he early. He arrives **precisely** when he means to."

J. R. R. TOLKIEN

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

Bob is **absolutely** the right person for the job.

We know from this sentence that Bob is a good choice, but we'd like more information on how that was determined or why he is so right for the job.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *absolutely*:

Bob is \_\_\_\_\_ the right person for the job.

<b>conclusively</b>	There were some questions as to whether Bob was right for the job, and this puts an end to any debate.
<b>consummately</b>	Bob has the highest degree of qualifications for the job.
<b>decidedly</b>	There was never any hesitation that Bob was right for the job.
<b>easily</b>	Neither discussion nor considering other candidates was even necessary, because Bob is without question right for the job.
<b>fully</b>	Bob is right for the job in every manner and degree.
<b>precisely</b>	For some or many reasons, Bob is exactly the right choice—even if he doesn't match an original profile of who would be right.
<b>unconditionally</b>	Bob is right for the job, with no conditions or limits on that perspective.

**CURED!**

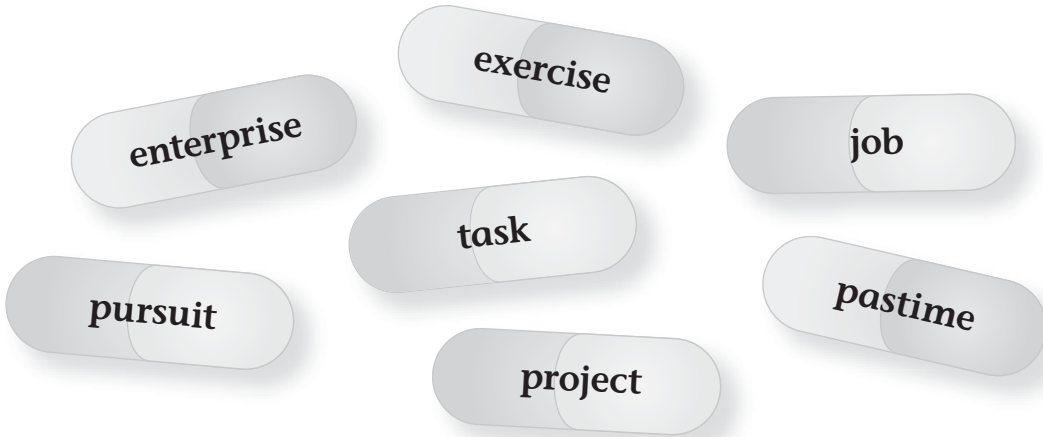
Effort only **fully** releases its reward after a person refuses to quit.

NAPOLEON HILL

# activity

PART OF SPEECH *noun*

DEFINITION *a specific deed, action, or function*



## cures for the common word

act  
avocation  
bag  
ball game  
bit  
deed  
endeavor  
**enterprise**  
entertainment

**exercise**  
game  
hobby  
interest  
**job**  
labor  
occupation  
**pastime**  
**project**

**pursuit**  
racket  
scene  
scheme  
stunt  
**task**  
undertaking  
venture  
work

## CURED!

There are some **enterprises** in which a careful disorderliness is the true method.

HERMAN MELVILLE

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Matt stayed after school to spend time on his **activity**.

We're unsure whether Matt is spending time on something fun—or not fun. The following alternatives give us more information.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *activity*:

Matt stayed after school to spend time on his \_\_\_\_\_.

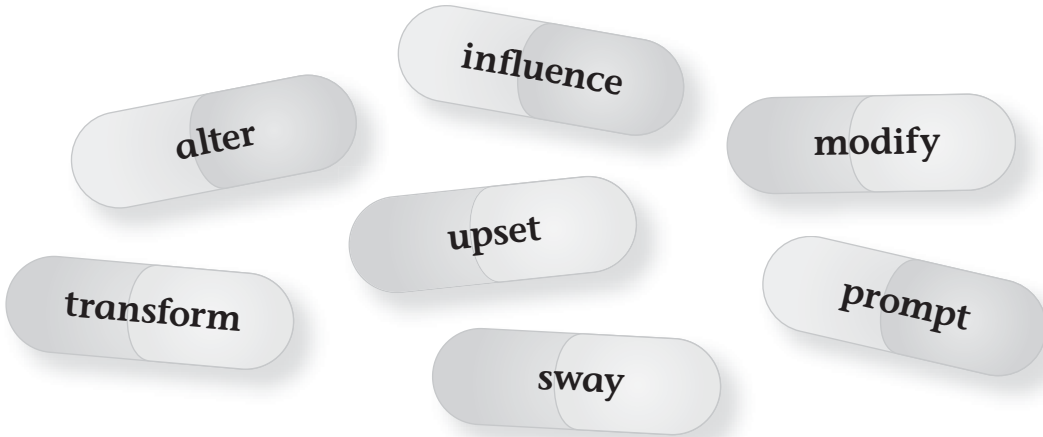
<b>enterprise</b>	Matt is doing something that involves his ingenuity or is related to something entrepreneurial.
<b>exercise</b>	Matt is doing something as a means of practice or training.
<b>job</b>	Matt is performing work as part of the routine of his occupation, possibly for pay.
<b>pastime</b>	Matt is enjoying a hobby or something that amuses him.
<b>project</b>	Matt is working on something he has contemplated or devised either for fun or to meet an obligation, such as a science project.
<b>pursuit</b>	Matt is putting in an effort to attain something that meets special criteria for him, a quest, such as practicing and honing a particular skill.
<b>task</b>	Matt has a commonly assigned piece of work to be finished within a certain time.

**CURED!**

*Defining and analyzing humor is a **pastime** of humorless people.*

ROBERT BENCHLEY

# affect

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to produce a material influence upon or alteration in*

## cures for the common word

act on  
**alter**  
 change  
 disturb  
 impinge  
 impress  
 incline  
 induce  
**influence**

inspire  
 interest  
 involve  
 moderate  
**modify**  
 motivate  
 move  
 overcome  
 perturb

prevail  
**prompt**  
 regard  
 relate  
 stir  
**sway**  
 touch  
**transform**  
**upset**

## CURED!

Some painters **transform** the sun into a yellow spot, others transform a yellow spot into the sun.

PABLO PICASSO



DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Your decision will **affect** the outcome.

We know the outcome will be altered, but not how much your decision will be an influence, or if it will be positive or negative or to your advantage or the advantage of others.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *affect*:

Your decision will \_\_\_\_\_ the outcome.

<b>alter</b>	The outcome will be different in some ways, but without completely changing it into something new.
<b>influence</b>	You have the power or capacity to cause a change in indirect or intangible ways—presumably in your favor—and this may indicate negative interference.
<b>modify</b>	Your decision will cause fundamental changes to the outcome and may even give a new orientation to the end.
<b>prompt</b>	Your decision will spur on action.
<b>sway</b>	Your decision will have a controlling influence, possibly in a way that benefits you but not necessarily others.
<b>transform</b>	Your decision will greatly change the outcome in a positive way.
<b>upset</b>	Your decision will unexpectedly defeat an anticipated outcome.

**CURED!**

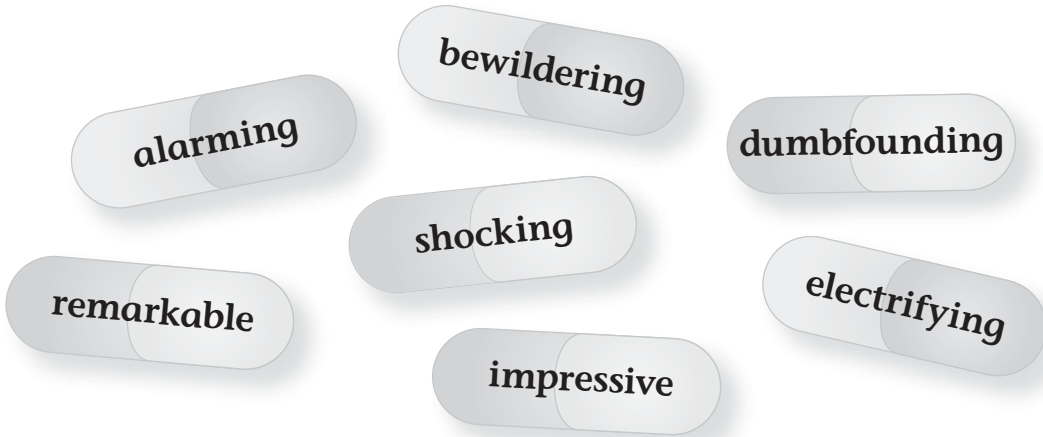
*We write frankly and freely but then we “**modify**” before we print.*

MARK TWAIN

# amazing

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *causing great surprise or sudden wonder*



## *cures for the common word*

affecting  
**alarming**  
 astonishing  
 astounding  
**bewildering**  
 blown away  
 bowled down  
 bowled over  
 dazing

dazzling  
**dumbfounding**  
**electrifying**  
 flabbergasting  
**impressive**  
 moving  
 overwhelming  
 perplexing  
 put away

**remarkable**  
**shocking**  
 staggering  
 startling  
 striking  
 stunning  
 stupefying  
 touching  
 unexpected

**CURED!**

*Love is the only **shocking** act left on the face of the earth.*

SANDRA BERNHARD

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

The magician performed **amazing** tricks.

We were all amazed at the wonder of the magician's tricks, but *amazing* doesn't specify whether the experience was intellectual or emotional, positive or negative. There are different ways to be amazed.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *amazing*:

The magician performed \_\_\_\_\_ tricks.

<b>alarming</b>	The tricks were startling and caused a sudden fear or panic.
<b>bewildering</b>	The tricks confused us, especially because of their complexity, variety, and multitude of objects and considerations.
<b>dumbfounding</b>	The tricks were so remarkable that we didn't know what to say.
<b>electrifying</b>	The tricks startled us and thrilled us.
<b>impressive</b>	The tricks made such an impression on us that we marveled at how the magician was able to accomplish them.
<b>remarkable</b>	The tricks were uncommon in an extraordinary way.
<b>shocking</b>	The tricks were extremely startling, distressing, or offensive.

**CURED!**

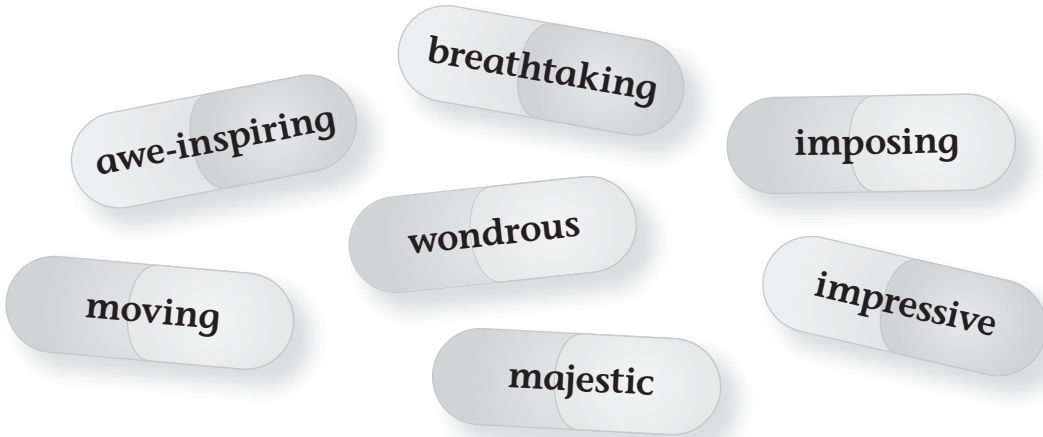
*I deny the lawfulness of telling a lie to a sick man for fear of **alarming** him. You have no business with consequences; you are to tell the truth.*

SAMUEL JOHNSON

# awesome

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *very impressive; inspiring; terrific, extraordinary*



## *cures for the common word*

alarming  
astonishing  
**awe-inspiring**  
awful  
beautiful  
**breathtaking**  
daunting  
dreadful  
exalted  
fabulous  
fearful  
fearsome

formidable  
frantic  
frightening  
grand  
horrifying  
**imposing**  
**impressive**  
intimidating  
magnificent  
**majestic**  
mind-blowing  
**moving**

nervous  
outstanding  
overwhelming  
shocking  
striking  
stunning  
stupefying  
stupendous  
terrible  
terrifying  
wonderful  
**wondrous**

## CURED!

*Thunder is good, thunder is **impressive**; but it is lightning that does the work.*

MARK TWAIN

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

The view of Bryce Canyon's rock formations was **awesome**.

*Awesome* is an all-encompassing description of the rock formations, which made a significant impression on us, but limits us from knowing just how the view impacted us.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *awesome*:

The view of Bryce Canyon's rock formations was \_\_\_\_\_.

<b>awe-inspiring</b>	The view inspired awe by its exceptional beauty.
<b>breathtaking</b>	The view was exciting, thrilling, and astonishing, figuratively taking our breath away, because we'd never seen anything like this before.
<b>imposing</b>	The formations were very impressive because of their great size, dignity, and stately appearance.
<b>impressive</b>	The view gave us a feeling of respect and admiration for what nature had created.
<b>majestic</b>	The view had an air of authority and dignity—superior to mundane matters.
<b>moving</b>	The view was stirring and evoked strong feelings or emotions.
<b>wondrous</b>	The view is to be marveled at, and we appreciated its wonder, uniqueness, or other special qualities.

**CURED!**

*The speed of communications is **wondrous** to behold. It is also true that speed can multiply the distribution of information that we know to be untrue.*

EDWARD R. MURROW

# bad

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*  
 DEFINITION *of poor or inferior quality; defective; deficient*



## cures for the common word

abominable  
 amiss  
**atrocious**  
 awful  
 bad news  
 beastly  
 bottom out  
 bumper  
 careless  
**cheap**  
 corrupt  
 crummy  
**defective**  
 deficient

disagreeable  
 dissatisfactory  
 dreadful  
 erroneous  
 fallacious  
 faulty  
 harmful  
 imperfect  
 inadequate  
 incorrect  
**inferior**  
 injurious  
 lousy  
 off

**offensive**  
 poor  
 repulsive  
 rough  
 sad  
 skuzzy  
**sleazy**  
**slipshod**  
 stinking  
 substandard  
 synthetic  
 unacceptable  
 unfavorable  
 unsatisfactory

## CURED!

*You'd be surprised how much it costs to look this **cheap**.*

DOLLY PARTON

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

One of the judges felt the contestant's **bad** costume ruined the performance.

Using *bad* doesn't indicate what the judge thought was so awful about the costume, and the alternatives tell us more about how the quality of a costume could ruin a whole performance.

## powerful remedies

Substitute an alternative remedy for *bad*:

One of the judges felt the contestant's \_\_\_\_\_ costume ruined the performance.

<b>atrocious</b>	The contestant's costume was shockingly dreadful, abominable—extremely awful.
<b>cheap</b>	Nothing negative about something being inexpensive, but <i>cheap</i> gives the implication that it is also of poor quality.
<b>defective</b>	The costume wasn't working properly during the performance.
<b>inferior</b>	The contestant's costume didn't meet high enough expectations to make a good impression.
<b>offensive</b>	The contestant's costume was disagreeable and repugnant to the senses, morally or otherwise.
<b>sleazy</b>	The costume was flimsy, and the connotation is that it didn't show the class or sophistication it probably should have.
<b>slipshod</b>	The costume was sloppy, and the judge could tell it was put together carelessly.

CURED!

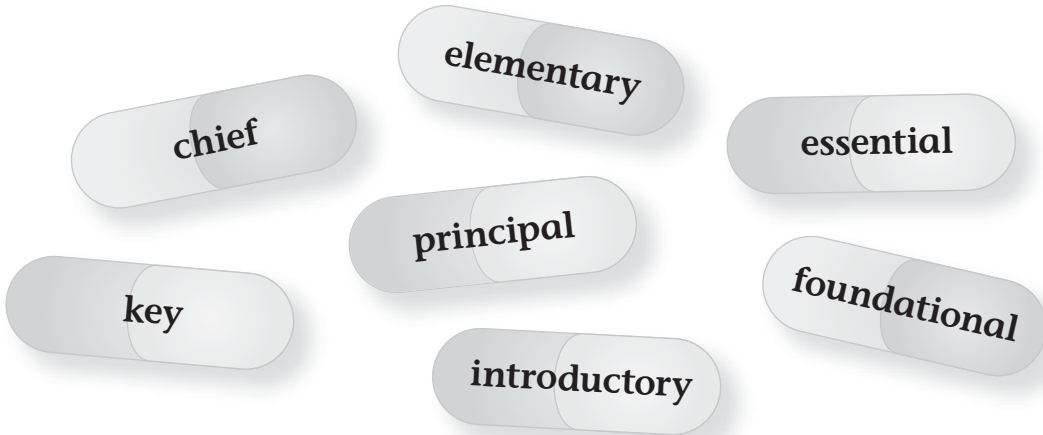
*Revenge is not always sweet, once it is consummated we feel **inferior** to our victim.*

EMILE M. CIORAN

# basic

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *elementary; of, being, or serving as a starting point; fundamental*



## *cures for the common word*

basal  
beginning  
capital  
central  
**chief**  
easy  
elemental  
**elementary**  
**essential**

**foundational**  
fundamental  
indispensable  
inherent  
intrinsic  
**introductory**  
**key**  
main  
necessary

primary  
primitive  
**principal**  
radical  
rudimentary  
simplified  
substratal  
underlying  
vital

## CURED!

*In the television age, the **key** distinction is between the candidate who can speak poetry and the one who can only speak prose.*

RICHARD M. NIXON



DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Our textbook covered the **basic** concepts of advertising.

We can tell that the concepts in the book are necessary in any study of advertising, but the definition of what is considered *basic* isn't clear.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *basic*:

Our textbook covered the \_\_\_\_\_ concepts of advertising.

<b>chief</b>	These are the most important concepts, though there are different perspectives on what is most important.
<b>elementary</b>	The concepts covered pertain to the rudimentary principles of advertising.
<b>essential</b>	The concepts covered are indispensable and should not be disregarded.
<b>foundational</b>	These concepts represent the groundwork on which more advanced study will be based.
<b>introductory</b>	The concepts covered serve as only a starting point, with much more to be learned.
<b>key</b>	The major and pivotal concepts are covered; <i>key</i> may also mean the concepts are presented in a brief or condensed manner.
<b>principal</b>	Concepts of highest importance are covered.

**CURED!**

*All men who have turned out worth anything have had the **chief** hand in their own education.*

SIR WALTER SCOTT

# beautiful

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *having qualities that give great pleasure or satisfaction to the senses or mind*



## cures for the common word

alluring  
angelic  
appealing  
attractive  
beauteous  
bewitching  
charming  
classy  
comely  
cute  
dazzling  
delicate  
delightful  
divine  
elegant

enticing  
excellent  
exquisite  
fair  
fascinating  
fine  
foxy  
good-looking  
gorgeous  
graceful  
grand  
handsome  
ideal  
lovely  
magnificent

marvelous  
pleasing  
pretty  
radiant  
ravishing  
refined  
resplendent  
shapely  
splendid  
statuesque  
stunning  
sublime  
superb  
taking  
wonderful

## CURED!

*To love for the sake of being loved is human, but to love for the sake of loving is **angelic**.*

ALPHONSE DE LEMARTINE

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

The **beautiful** statue caught our attention.

We know the statue is appealing and attention grabbing, but we're not sure exactly in what way.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *beautiful*:

The \_\_\_\_\_ statue caught our attention.

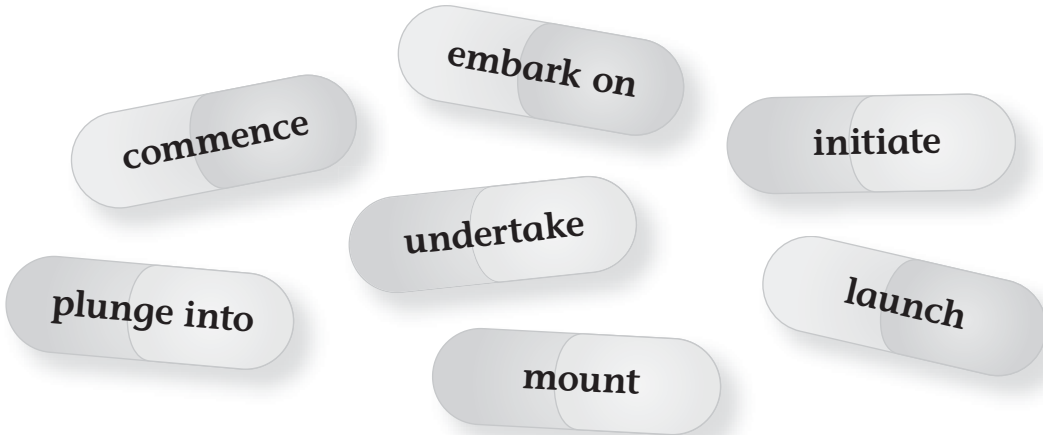
<b>alluring</b>	The statue has a tempting, enticing, or seductive quality.
<b>angelic</b>	The statue is befitting an angel, especially in beauty or in expressing virtue.
<b>delicate</b>	The details or craftsmanship of the statue is exquisitely fine or dainty.
<b>elegant</b>	The statue is luxurious in style or design.
<b>fascinating</b>	There's something about the look or meaning of the statue that is of great interest or attraction.
<b>graceful</b>	The statue is pleasing or attractive in line, proportion, or movement.
<b>stunning</b>	The statue is strikingly impressive, especially in beauty or excellence.

**CURED!**

Grow **graceful**, growing old.

ANONYMOUS

# begin

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to perform the first or earliest part of some action; to commence; to start*

## cures for the common word

activate  
actualize  
break ground  
bring about  
cause  
**commence**  
create  
effect  
**embark on**  
enter on  
enter upon  
establish  
eventuate  
found

generate  
get going  
give impulse  
go ahead  
go into  
impel  
inaugurate  
induce  
**initiate**  
instigate  
institute  
introduce  
**launch**  
lead

make  
make active  
motivate  
**mount**  
occasion  
open  
originate  
**plunge into**  
prepare  
produce  
set about  
set up  
trigger  
**undertake**

## CURED!

*Two of the most difficult tasks a writer can **undertake**, to write the truth about himself and about his mother.*

TIME MAGAZINE

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

The military will **begin** the offensive in twenty-four hours.

The use of *begin* tells us when the action will start, but it doesn't give us a clear idea of the military's role and intent.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *begin*:

The military will \_\_\_\_\_ the offensive in twenty-four hours.

<b>commence</b>	The military is taking the first step to set the offensive in motion.
<b>embark on</b>	The military is about to begin a major offensive.
<b>initiate</b>	The military will take the lead in the offensive.
<b>launch</b>	The military will enter enthusiastically into the offensive.
<b>mount</b>	The military will be increasing the amount or intensity of the offensive.
<b>plunge into</b>	The military will forcibly thrust into the offensive, or perhaps it is moving ahead suddenly.
<b>undertake</b>	The military is taking it upon itself to achieve its objective.

**CURED!**

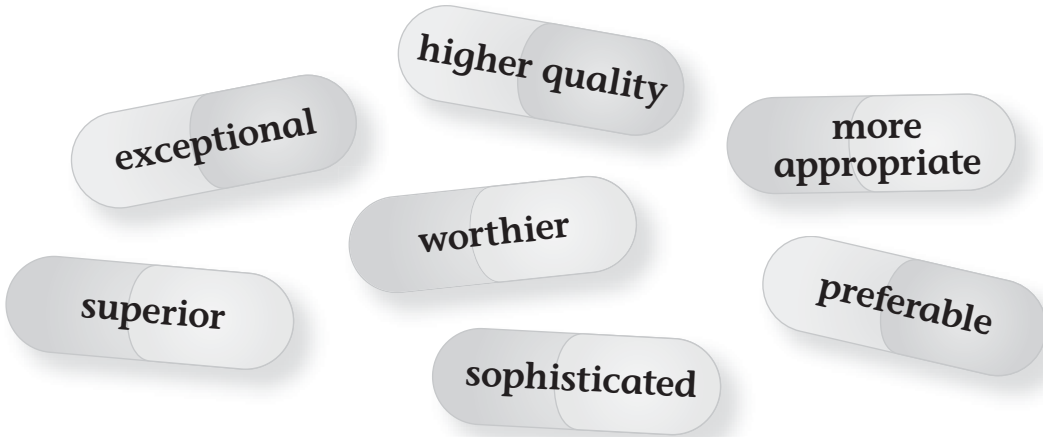
*Courage is the ladder on which all the other virtues **mount**.*

CLARE BOOTHE LUCE

# better

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *greater in excellence or higher in quality*



## cures for the common word

bigger  
choice  
exceeding  
**exceptional**  
finer  
fitter  
greater  
**higher quality**

improved  
larger  
**more appropriate**  
more desirable  
more fitting  
more select  
more suitable  
more useful

more valuable  
**preferable**  
preferred  
prominent  
**sophisticated**  
**superior**  
surpassing  
**worthier**

## CURED!

*The qualities of an **exceptional** cook are akin to those of a successful tight-rope walker: an abiding passion for the task, courage to go out on a limb and an impeccable sense of balance.*

BRYAN MILLER

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

George is a **better** choice for lead guitarist.

We'd like to know what particular quality makes George the better choice and why better than someone else.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *better*:

George is a \_\_\_\_\_ choice for lead guitarist.

<b>exceptional</b>	George is an unusually excellent lead guitarist, making him one of a select, exclusive group.
<b>higher quality</b>	George's talents are above those of others who were compared.
<b>more appropriate</b>	George is the better choice for reasons beyond his playing skills; for example, he may look better for the part or have good connections in the industry.
<b>preferable</b>	George is the choice over others, but <i>preferable</i> still doesn't tell us exactly why.
<b>sophisticated</b>	George's music appeals to the tastes of a more discerning or knowledgeable audience.
<b>superior</b>	George's talents are above those of the average guitarist.
<b>worthier</b>	George is more deserving of the gig of lead guitarist.

**CURED!**

*The risk of a wrong decision is **preferable** to the terror of indecision.*

MAIMONIDES

# big

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*  
 DEFINITION *large, as in size, height, width, or amount*



## cures for the common word

ample  
 brimming  
 bulky  
 burly  
 capacious  
 chock-full  
**colossal**  
 commodious  
 considerable  
 copious  
 enormous  
**extensive**  
 fat  
 full

gigantic  
 heavy-duty  
 heavyweight  
**hefty**  
 huge  
 hulking  
 humungous  
 husky  
 immense  
 jumbo  
 king-sized  
 mammoth  
**massive**  
 monster

oversize  
 ponderous  
**prodigious**  
 roomy  
 sizable  
 spacious  
 strapping  
 stuffed  
**substantial**  
 thundering  
 vast  
 voluminous  
 walloping  
**whopping**

## CURED!

*Old age is like climbing a mountain. You climb from ledge to ledge. The higher you get, the more tired and breathless you become, but your views become more **extensive**.*

INGMAR BERGMAN



DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

Casey stood beside the **big** marble columns of the Acropolis.

We all have different perspectives on size, and *big* in this sentence doesn't give us a familiar frame of reference, whereas some of the alternatives give us a much better sense of the columns' enormity.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *big*:

Casey stood beside the \_\_\_\_\_ marble columns of the Acropolis.

<b>colossal</b>	Generally meaning "extraordinarily great in size," in architecture <i>colossal</i> can also pertain to a classical order whose columns span two or more stories of a building.
<b>extensive</b>	The columns extend over a great area.
<b>hefty</b>	The columns are clearly heavy and weighty.
<b>massive</b>	The columns are large and bulky.
<b>prodigious</b>	Many things can be big, but <i>prodigious</i> gives the sense that to you they are unusually great in size.
<b>substantial</b>	Not only are the columns big in size, but they are also of solid and strong construction.
<b>whopping</b>	An informal way to say, "Those columns are huge!"

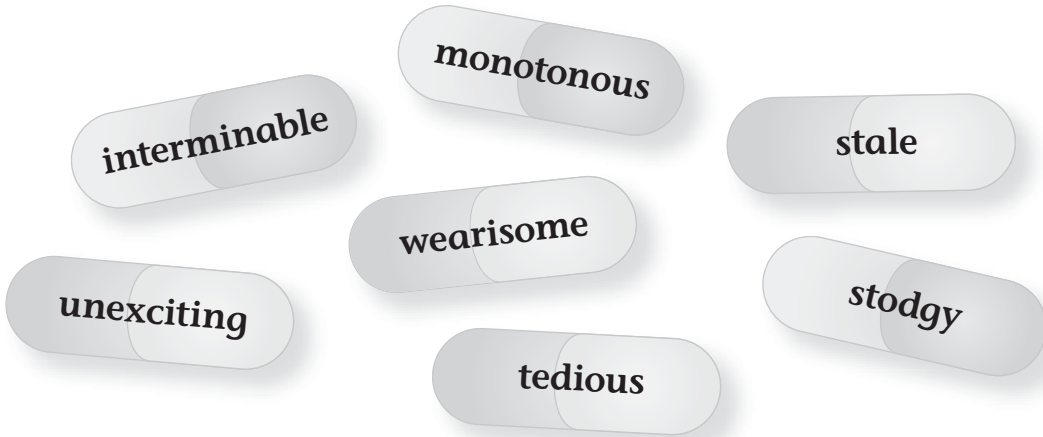
**CURED!**

Why does a slight tax increase cost you two hundred dollars and a **substantial** tax cut save you thirty cents?

PEG BRACKEN

# boring

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*  
 DEFINITION *uninteresting and tiresome; dull*



## cures for the common word

bomb  
 bromidic  
 characterless  
 colorless  
 commonplace  
 drab  
 drag  
 drudging  
 dull  
 flat  
 ho-hum  
 humdrum  
 insipid

**interminable**  
 irksome  
 lifeless  
**monotonous**  
 platitudinous  
 plebeian  
 prosaic  
 repetitious  
 routine  
 spiritless  
**stale**  
 stereotypical  
**stodgy**

stuffy  
 stupid  
 tame  
**tedious**  
 threadbare  
 tiresome  
 tiring  
 trite  
**unexciting**  
 vapid  
**wearisome**  
 well-worn  
 zero

## CURED!

*Poetry is like fish: if it's fresh, it's good; if it's **stale**, it's bad; and if you're not certain, try it on the cat.*

OSBERT SITWELL

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

Michael and Beth sat through a **boring** movie.

From this sentence, it's likely a safe bet that Michael and Beth didn't enjoy the movie, but we don't know what specific qualities made it so dull.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *boring*:

Michael and Beth sat through a \_\_\_\_\_ movie.

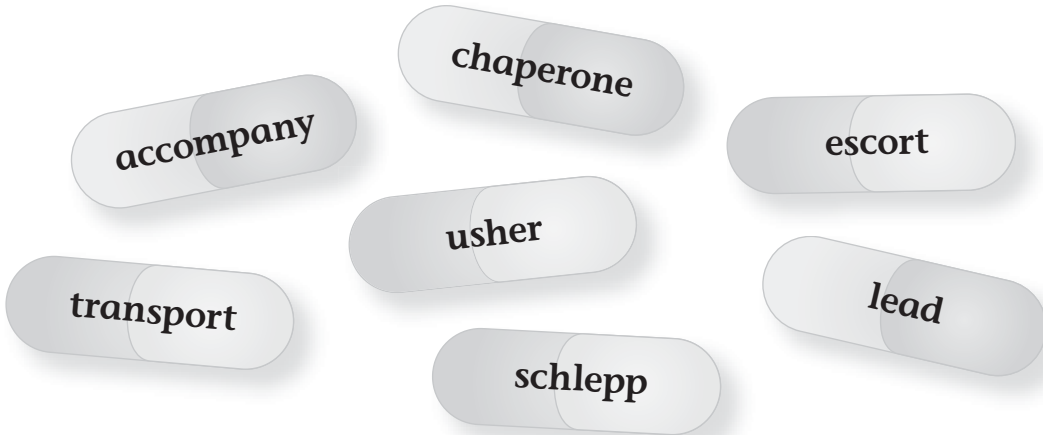
<b>interminable</b>	The movie was so monotonously or annoyingly long that they thought it would never end.
<b>monotonous</b>	The movie was severely lacking in variety.
<b>stale</b>	The movie had no novelty; it was just like movies they'd seen over and over before.
<b>stodgy</b>	The movie was unduly formal and traditional.
<b>tedious</b>	The movie was tiresome because it was so long, slow, or dull.
<b>unexciting</b>	The movie wasn't at all stimulating or thought-provoking.
<b>wearisome</b>	The movie was so lacking in interest that Michael and Beth were mentally tired out.

**CURED!**

Golf without bunkers and hazards would be tame and **monotonous**. So would life.

B. C. FORBES

# bring

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to carry, convey, lead, or cause to go along to another place*

## *cures for the common word*

**accompany**

attend

back

bear

carry

**chaperone**

companion

conduct

consort

convey

deliver

**escort**

fetch

gather

guide

heel

hump

import

**lead**

lug

pack

pick up

piggyback

ride

**schlepp**

shoulder

take

take along

tote

transfer

**transport**

truck

**usher**

## CURED!

You can **lead** a man to Congress, but you can't make him think.

MILTON BERLE

DIAGNOSIS *confusing*

Please **bring** the stars of the show backstage.

Choosing *bring* in this sentence is very neutral and doesn't tell us much about the speaker's perspective or opinion—about you or the stars of the show.

## powerful remedies

Substitute an alternative remedy for *bring*:

Please \_\_\_\_\_ the stars of the show backstage.

<b>accompany</b>	You're being asked to come backstage along with the stars, suggesting you are a welcome participant as opposed to someone doing a job.
<b>chaperone</b>	As part of your task, you may need to ensure propriety or restrict the activity of the stars or others in some way.
<b>escort</b>	Choosing <i>escort</i> can give a sense of respect for the stars or can suggest that the stars require some supervision.
<b>lead</b>	In this case, you will go before the stars in order to show the way.
<b>schlepp</b>	<i>Schlepp</i> gives the sense that the person speaking isn't very impressed or thrilled about accompanying the stars backstage.
<b>transport</b>	This implies you'll need to use some sort of car, cart, etc., to convey the stars, since it's doubtful you'll need to physically carry them.
<b>usher</b>	You will lead the stars backstage and possibly introduce them to the appropriate person or people.

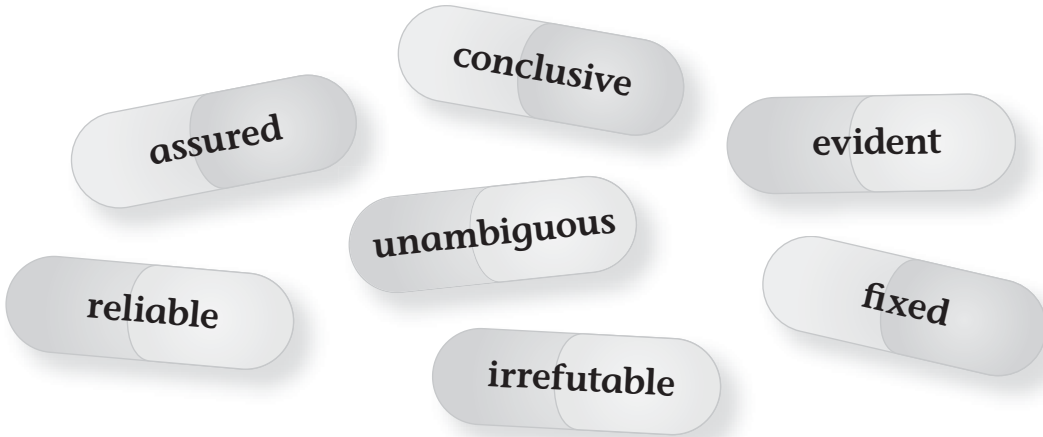
## CURED!

When you **escort** someone, escort him all the way to his destination; if you help someone, help him thoroughly.

CHINESE PROVERB

# certain

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*  
 DEFINITION *confident; free from doubt or reservation*



## cures for the common word

absolute  
**assured**  
 believing  
 calm  
 clear  
**conclusive**  
 convinced  
 definite  
**evident**  
 firm  
**fixed**  
 guaranteed

incontrovertible  
 indubitable  
 infallible  
**irrefutable**  
 known  
 plain  
 positive  
 predestined  
 real  
**reliable**  
 safe  
 sanguine

secure  
 set  
 sound  
 sure  
 true  
**unambiguous**  
 undeniable  
 unequivocal  
 unerring  
 unmistakable  
 unquestionable  
 verifiable

## CURED!

*We have no **reliable** guarantee that the afterlife will be any less exasperating than this one, have we?*

NOEL COWARD

DIAGNOSIS *confusing*

The outcome of the election was **certain**.

In this sentence, we can't clearly tell whether the certainty of the election was perceived in a positive or negative light.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *certain*:

The outcome of the election was \_\_\_\_\_.

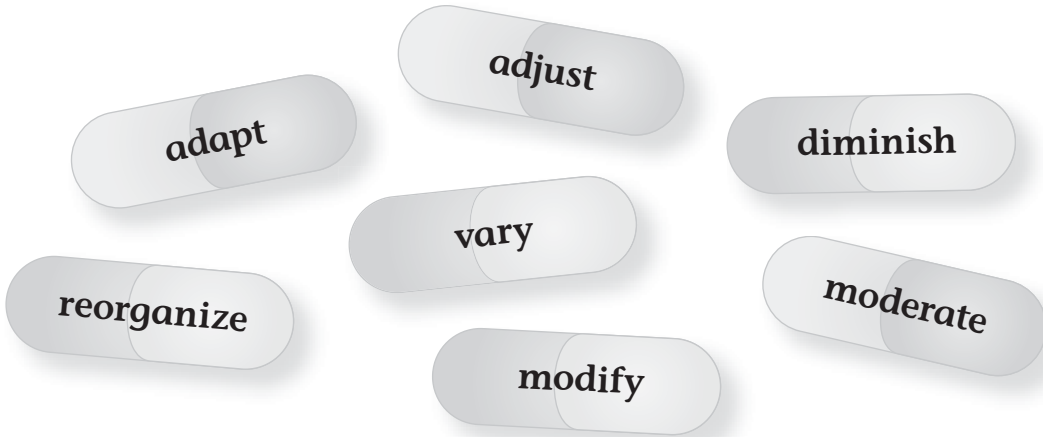
<b>assured</b>	The sense is that the outcome was promised or guaranteed in advance, and this can have either a positive or a negative connotation.
<b>conclusive</b>	The outcome served to settle a question.
<b>evident</b>	The outcome of the election is obvious and easily seen or understood.
<b>fixed</b>	This offers a negative connotation, implying that the outcome was arranged in advance privately and possibly dishonestly.
<b>irrefutable</b>	It would be impossible to deny or disprove the outcome.
<b>reliable</b>	People will be confident that the outcome is dependable, accurate, and honest.
<b>unambiguous</b>	The outcome has a single clearly defined meaning.

**CURED!**

*If you think of paying court to the men in power, your eternal ruin is **assured**.*

STENDHAL [MARIE-HENRI BEYLE]

# change

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to make different from what it is or from what it would be if left alone*

## cures for the common word

accommodate

**adapt****adjust**

alter

alternate

commute

convert

**diminish**

diverge

diversify

evolve

fluctuate

make over

make innovations

**moderate****modify**

modulate

mutate

naturalize

recondition

redo

reform

regenerate

remake

remodel

renovate

**reorganize**

replace

resolve

restyle

revolutionize

shape

shift

substitute

tamper with

transfigure

transform

translate

transmute

transpose

turn

vacillate

**vary**

veer

warp

## CURED!

Age does not **diminish** the extreme disappointment of having a scoop of ice cream fall from the cone.

JIM FIEBIG



DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

Martha always wants to **change** the rules in the middle of the game.

We can infer from this sentence that the speaker is not happy about the rule changing, but how unhappy may be better clarified by how and how much Martha wants to change the rules.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *change*:

Martha always wants to \_\_\_\_\_ the rules in the middle of the game.

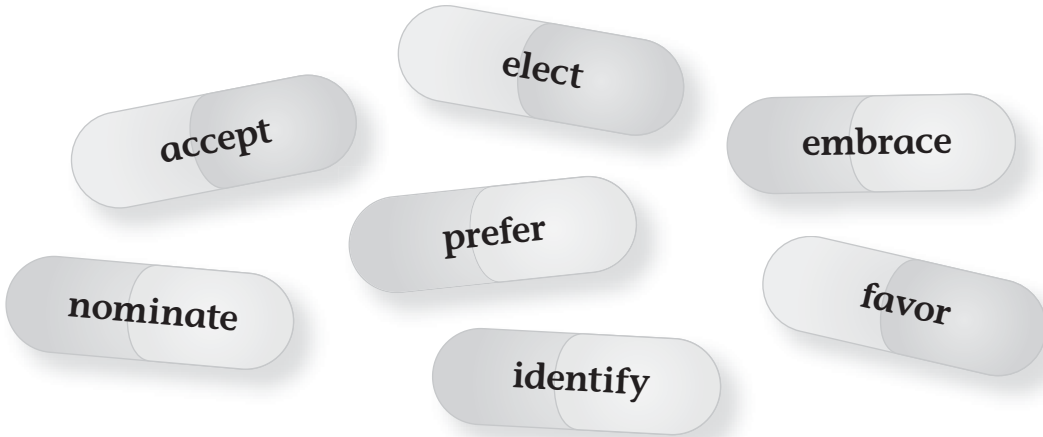
<b>adapt</b>	Martha wants to make logical or fitting changes that make sense.
<b>adjust</b>	Now Martha wants to change the rules so they fit or conform—but to her perspective and not necessarily to anyone else's.
<b>diminish</b>	Martha wants to put less emphasis on the rules of the game, perhaps because it's not going well for her.
<b>moderate</b>	Martha feels there are too many rules or they are too strict, so she wants to reduce the excessiveness of them.
<b>modify</b>	Martha wants to change the form or quality of the rules, but only slightly.
<b>reorganize</b>	Martha wants to completely rearrange the rules.
<b>vary</b>	Martha wants to change the rules slightly to avoid monotony.

**CURED!**

*Not being able to control events, I control myself, and I **adapt** myself to them, if they do not adapt themselves to me.*

MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE

# choose

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to select from a number of possible alternatives; to decide on and pick out*

## cures for the common word

**accept**  
 adopt  
 appoint  
 cast  
 co-opt  
 crave  
 cull  
 decide on  
 designate  
 desire  
 determine  
**elect**  
**embrace**  
 excerpt  
 extract

fancy  
**favor**  
 finger  
 fix on  
 glean  
**identify**  
 judge  
 love  
 name  
**nominate**  
 opt for  
 predestined  
**prefer**  
 see fit  
 select

set aside  
 settle upon  
 sift out  
 single out  
 slot  
 sort  
 tag  
 take  
 tap  
 want  
 weigh  
 will  
 winnow  
 wish  
 wish for

## CURED!

*History will never **accept** difficulties as an excuse.*

JOHN F. KENNEDY

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

This year the foundation will **choose** two charities to support.

Using *choose* in this sentence gives complete information but doesn't give us the sense of how the members of the foundation feel or think about the two charities.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *choose*:

This year the foundation will \_\_\_\_\_ two charities to support.

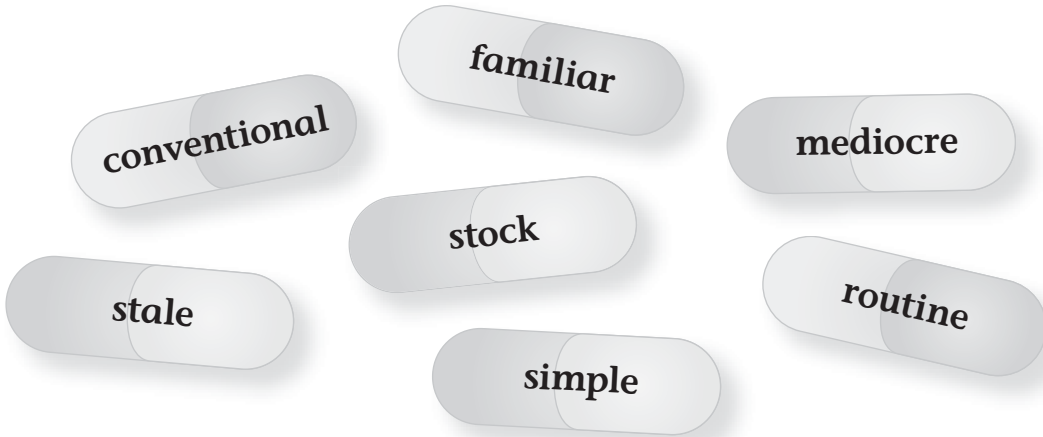
<b>accept</b>	The charities were suggested or offered (as opposed to sought out), and the foundation will respond affirmatively to supporting them.
<b>elect</b>	In this case, the charities were voted on and won the votes.
<b>embrace</b>	The foundation willingly and eagerly wants to support these two charities.
<b>favor</b>	The foundation prefers these two charities and may have treated them with partiality in comparison to other charities.
<b>identify</b>	This tells us that the foundation recognized these two charities; the connotation is that the foundation recognized <i>and</i> chose them.
<b>nominate</b>	The foundation is proposing these two charities to support.
<b>prefer</b>	The foundation members like these two charities better and value them more highly than others.

**CURED!**

*People say that life is the thing, but I **prefer** reading.*

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH

# common

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *ordinary; widespread; general; of frequent occurrence; usual; familiar*

## cures for the common word

accepted  
average  
banal  
bourgeois  
casual  
characteristic  
colloquial  
**conventional**  
current  
customary  
daily  
everyday  
**familiar**  
frequent  
general

habitual  
hackneyed  
homely  
humdrum  
informal  
**mediocre**  
monotonous  
natural  
obscure  
passable  
plain  
prevailing  
prevalent  
prosaic  
regular

**routine**  
run-of-the-mill  
**simple**  
**stale**  
standard  
stereotypical  
**stock**  
trite  
typical  
undistinguished  
universal  
unvaried  
usual  
wearisome  
workaday

## CURED!

*Great spirits have always faced violent protest from **mediocre** minds.*

ALBERT EINSTEIN

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Claire selected a **common** theme for her term paper.

As the multiple definitions of this word indicate, *common* can mean such a wide variety of things—some positive and some negative—so we are unclear as to what it means in this sentence.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *common*:

Claire selected a \_\_\_\_\_ theme for her term paper.

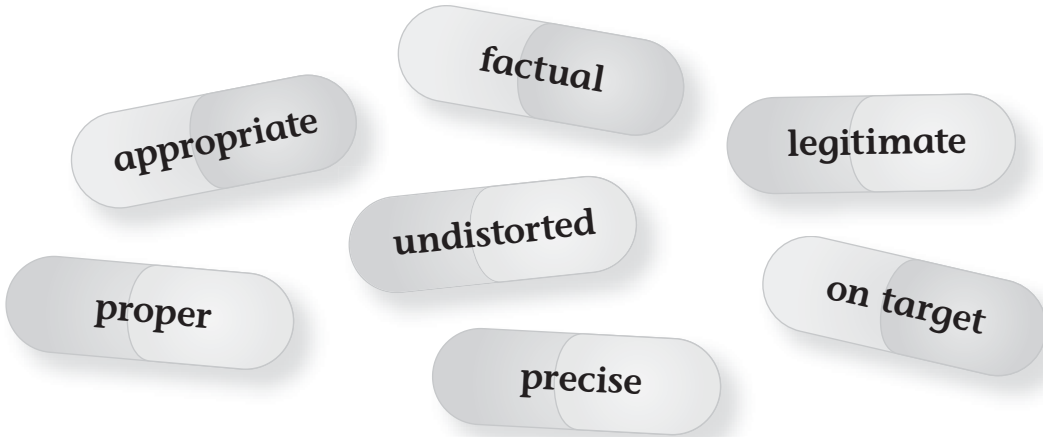
<b>conventional</b>	The theme is ordinary rather than different or original, but this doesn't usually have a negative connotation.
<b>familiar</b>	The theme is one known by many people.
<b>mediocre</b>	The theme is of only ordinary or moderate quality; it is barely adequate.
<b>routine</b>	The theme is unimaginative and in this sentence has a negative connotation—likely indicating the professor has seen this theme over and over.
<b>simple</b>	The theme is easy to understand, and we're not sure in this case if that's good or bad.
<b>stale</b>	The theme lacks originality or spontaneity or presents a perspective that many have presented before.
<b>stock</b>	Since <i>stock</i> means something kept regularly on hand, this theme might have been taken from a list online or some overused resource.

**CURED!**

My religion is very **simple**. My religion is kindness.

THE DALAI LAMA

# correct

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *free from error; especially conforming to fact or truth*

## cures for the common word

actual  
amen  
**appropriate**  
equitable  
exact  
**factual**  
faithful  
faultless  
flawless  
for sure

impeccable  
just  
**legitimate**  
nice  
OK  
**on target**  
perfect  
**precise**  
**proper**  
regular

right  
righteous  
rigorous  
stone  
strict  
true  
**undistorted**  
unmistaken  
veracious  
veridical

## CURED!

*Cyberspace: a consensual hallucination experienced daily by billions of **legitimate** operators, in every nation.*

WILLIAM GIBSON

DIAGNOSIS *confusing*

Be sure to use the **correct** details in the brochure.

Especially in business, *correct* can mean much more than just the facts—it can refer to etiquette or tone—so we need more description of what *correct* means for the brochure.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *correct*:

Be sure to use the \_\_\_\_\_ details in the brochure.

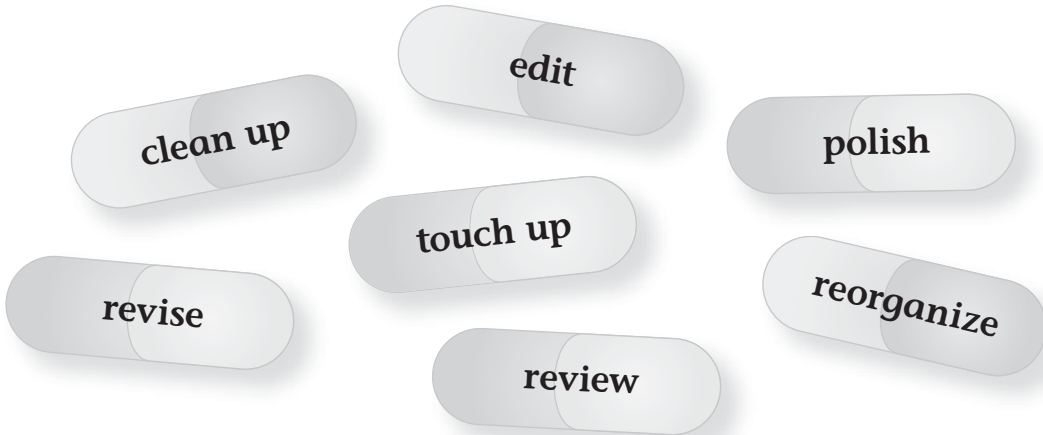
<b>appropriate</b>	The details should be suitable or fitting for this particular brochure.
<b>factual</b>	Be sure all details pertain to accurate facts.
<b>legitimate</b>	The details need to be in accordance with established or accepted patterns and standards.
<b>on target</b>	This is a slang way to say that the details should reach a particular audience or substantiate a point.
<b>precise</b>	The details should be exactly what you want to say, neither more nor less.
<b>proper</b>	The details should strictly belong or be applicable to the brochure, company, and/or image.
<b>undistorted</b>	The details should not be altered or misrepresented.

**CURED!**

*In suggesting gifts: money is **appropriate**, and one size fits all.*

WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST

# correct

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to set or make true, accurate, or right; to remove the errors or faults from*

## cures for the common word

alter  
ameliorate  
amend  
better  
change  
**clean up**  
cure  
debug  
do over  
doctor  
**edit**  
emend  
fiddle with  
fix up  
go over

help  
improve  
launder  
make over  
make right  
mend  
pay dues  
pick up  
**polish**  
reclaim  
reconstruct  
rectify  
redress  
reform  
regulate

remedy  
remodel  
**reorganize**  
repair  
retouch  
**review**  
**revise**  
right  
set right  
set straight  
shape up  
straighten out  
**touch up**  
turn around  
upgrade

## CURED!

*He who does not get fun and enjoyment out of every day . . . needs to **reorganize** his life.*

GEORGE M. ADAMS



DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Lois will **correct** the article before it's published.

We know Lois will fix the article in some way, but using a more precise word will help us understand to what level or degree.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *correct*:

Lois will \_\_\_\_\_ the article before it's published.

<b>clean up</b>	Lois will correct errors as well as look to rid the article of small details or wording that is considered undesirable.
<b>edit</b>	Now an accepted term to mean to revise or correct, <i>edit</i> may also imply a professional editor's review of the article.
<b>polish</b>	In addition to correcting errors, Lois will aim to refine and add elegance to the article.
<b>reorganize</b>	The article needs to undergo changes in organization.
<b>review</b>	Lois will examine the article with an eye to criticism or correction.
<b>revise</b>	Lois will fix or improve the article, or simply only update the information.
<b>touch up</b>	There may not even be errors in the article, but it could benefit from slight changes.

**CURED!**

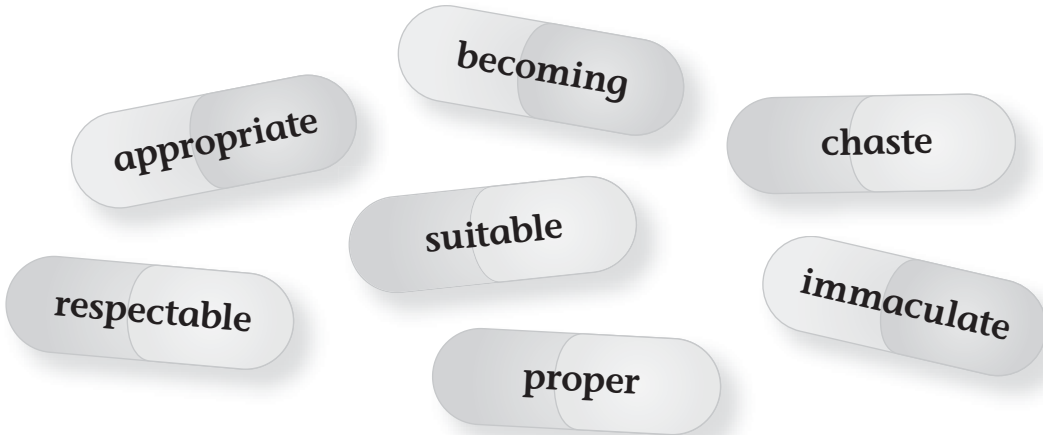
*I **edit** out the bad stuff and deliver the good stuff. Seventy-five percent of all wine is awful.*

PETER MORRELL

# decent

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *respectable; suitable; conforming to a recognized standard of good taste*



## cures for the common word

adequate  
**appropriate**  
approved  
**becoming**  
befitting  
**chaste**  
clean  
comely  
conforming  
continent  
correct  
decorous  
delicate  
ethical  
fair

fit  
fitting  
good  
honest  
honorable  
**immaculate**  
mannerly  
modest  
moral  
nice  
noble  
presentable  
**proper**  
prudent  
pure

reserved  
**respectable**  
right  
spotless  
stainless  
standard  
straight  
**suitable**  
trustworthy  
unblemished  
undefiled  
untarnished  
upright  
virtuous  
worthy

## CURED!

*The great artists of the world are never Puritans, and seldom even ordinarily respectable.*

HENRY LOUIS MENCKEN

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Pat needs a **decent** dress for the party.

In this sentence, it's unclear if Pat's dress needs to be in good shape, in morally good taste, or something completely different.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *decent*:

Pat needs a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ dress for the party.

<b>appropriate</b>	Pat's dress needs to be suitable and just right for this particular type of party.
<b>becoming</b>	Pat wants a dress that will have a pleasing effect and give her an attractive appearance.
<b>chaste</b>	Pat feels her dress should be conservative in style and not excessively ornamented.
<b>immaculate</b>	Pat needs her dress to be spotlessly clean, with every aspect of it in perfect condition.
<b>proper</b>	Pat's dress needs to conform to established standards for the occasion.
<b>respectable</b>	Pat hopes her dress will make a certain, esteemed impression on the attendees.
<b>suitable</b>	Pat would like her dress to be appropriate for the occasion and also fitting for her character.

**CURED!**

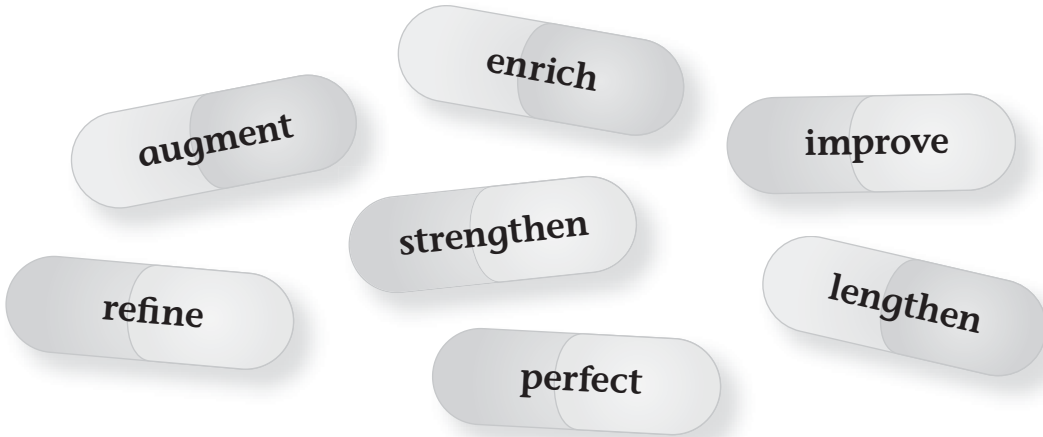
*I present myself to you in a form **suitable** to the relationship I wish to achieve with you.*

LUIGI PIRANDELLO

# develop

PART OF SPEECH *verb*

DEFINITION *to bring out the capabilities or possibilities of; to cause to grow or expand*



## *cures for the common word*

actualize  
advance  
amplify  
**augment**  
beautify  
broaden  
build up  
cultivate  
deepen  
dilate  
elaborate

enlarge  
**enrich**  
evolve  
exploit  
extend  
finish  
heighten  
**improve**  
intensify  
**lengthen**  
magnify

materialize  
**perfect**  
polish  
promote  
realize  
**refine**  
**strengthen**  
stretch  
unfold  
widen  
work out

## CURED!

*How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to **improve** the world.*

ANNE FRANK

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

The loan committee asked us to **develop** our business plan.

In order to provide the committee with exactly what they want, we need to know exactly what they want, and *develop* doesn't give us enough information.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *develop*:

The loan committee asked us to \_\_\_\_\_ our business plan.

<b>augment</b>	The committee likes what we have but wants us to give more detail to the information we already have included.
<b>enrich</b>	We need to add or change information to make our plan more desirable.
<b>improve</b>	We need to raise the quality of the information in the business plan.
<b>lengthen</b>	The committee feels our plan is too slight and wants a more substantial document.
<b>perfect</b>	Our plan is pretty good, but the committee wants us to make it flawless—or as close as possible—to give us the best opportunity of approval.
<b>refine</b>	Our plan needs to be more precise or in clearer form.
<b>strengthen</b>	To increase our chances for a loan, the bank wants us to make our plan stronger—for example, by giving more information on our financial status.

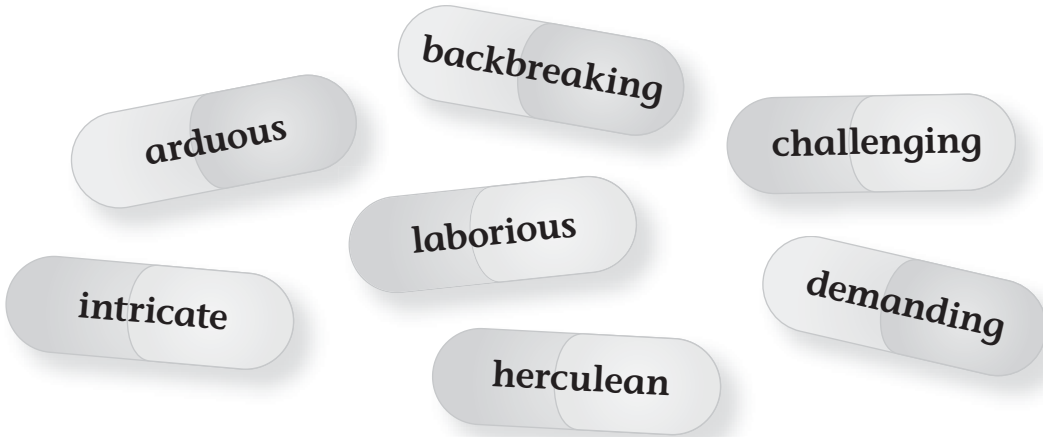
**CURED!**

*One thousand days to learn; ten thousand days to **refine**.*

JAPANESE PROVERB

# difficult

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*  
 DEFINITION *not easily or readily done*



## cures for the common word

ambitious  
**arduous**  
**backbreaking**  
 bothersome  
 burdensome  
**challenging**  
 crucial  
**demanding**  
 effortful  
 exacting  
 formidable  
 galling  
 gargantuan

hard  
 hard-won  
 heavy  
**herculean**  
 immense  
**intricate**  
 irritating  
 labored  
**laborious**  
 onerous  
 painful  
 problem  
 problematic

prohibitive  
 rigid  
 severe  
 strenuous  
 titanic  
 toilsome  
 tough  
 troublesome  
 trying  
 unyielding  
 uphill  
 upstream  
 wearisome

## CURED!

*To build may have to be the slow and **laborious** task of years.  
 To destroy can be the thoughtless act of a single day.*

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

A **difficult** job can wear you out, or it can be satisfying.

From this use of *difficult*, it's unclear whether we are talking about a job that is hard physically or mentally and in what way it is not easy.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *difficult*:

A(n) \_\_\_\_\_ job can wear you out, or it can be satisfying.

<b>arduous</b>	The job is physically strenuous, requiring a great deal of energy and vigor.
<b>backbreaking</b>	The job is an exhausting physical task, demanding great effort and endurance.
<b>challenging</b>	Though the job is not easy, it's an undertaking that is stimulating.
<b>demanding</b>	The job requires more effort and time than is generally considered to be due.
<b>herculean</b>	The job is very hard to perform, requiring great physical or mental strength.
<b>intricate</b>	The job is complicated and hard to understand.
<b>laborious</b>	The job requires a lot of work, exertion, or perseverance either physically or mentally.

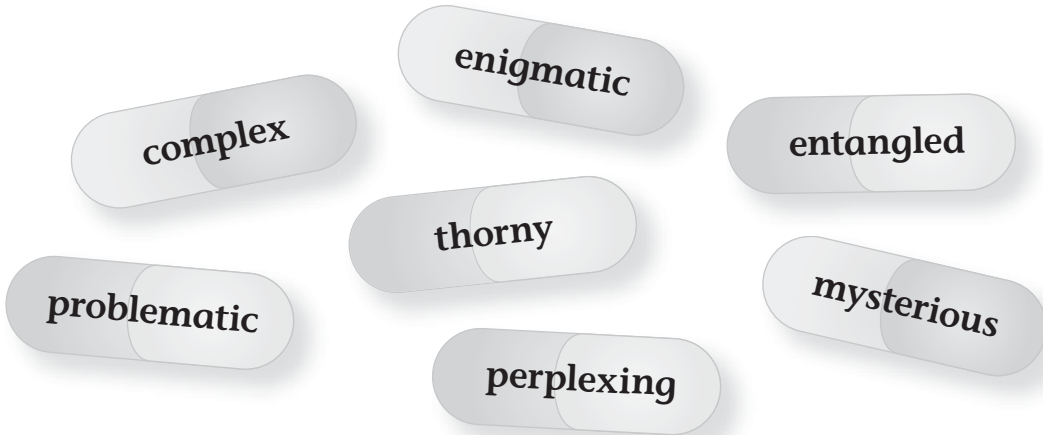
**CURED!**

*The story of civilization is, in a sense, the story of engineering—that long and **arduous** struggle to make the forces of nature work for man's good.*

L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP

# difficult

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*  
 DEFINITION *complicated; hard to comprehend*



## cures for the common word

abstract  
 abstruse  
 baffling  
 bewildering  
**complex**  
 confounding  
 confusing  
 dark  
 deep  
 delicate  
**enigmatic**  
 enigmatical  
**entangled**  
 esoteric

formidable  
 hard  
 hidden  
 inexplicable  
 intricate  
 involved  
 knotty  
 labyrinthine  
 loose  
 meandering  
**mysterious**  
 mystifying  
 obscure  
 obstinate

paradoxical  
**perplexing**  
**problematic**  
 profound  
 puzzling  
 rambling  
 subtle  
 tangled  
**thorny**  
 ticklish  
 troublesome  
 unclear  
 unfathomable  
 unintelligible

## CURED!

*Some problems are so **complex** that you have to be highly intelligent and well informed just to be undecided about them.*

LAURENCE JOHNSTON PETER



DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Romantic relationships can be **difficult**.

*Difficult* in this case is a little ambiguous. It has a negative connotation, but it doesn't give us the full picture of how the relationship is challenging.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *difficult*:

Romantic relationships can be \_\_\_\_\_.

<b>complex</b>	Some relationships can be so complicated or intricate that they're hard to understand or deal with.
<b>enigmatic</b>	Relationships can be baffling, puzzling, and mysterious, which may be a positive to some people.
<b>entangled</b>	Relationships can be intertwined with difficulties, including anything from emotional to logistical complications.
<b>mysterious</b>	Relationships can involve secrets or unexplained aspects, which may have a positive or negative connotation.
<b>perplexing</b>	Relationships can be confusing and marked with uncertainty or doubt.
<b>problematic</b>	Relationships can make great mental demands that seem hard to comprehend, solve, or even believe.
<b>thorny</b>	Relationships can be full of difficulties or complexities; <i>thorny</i> clearly has a much more negative connotation.

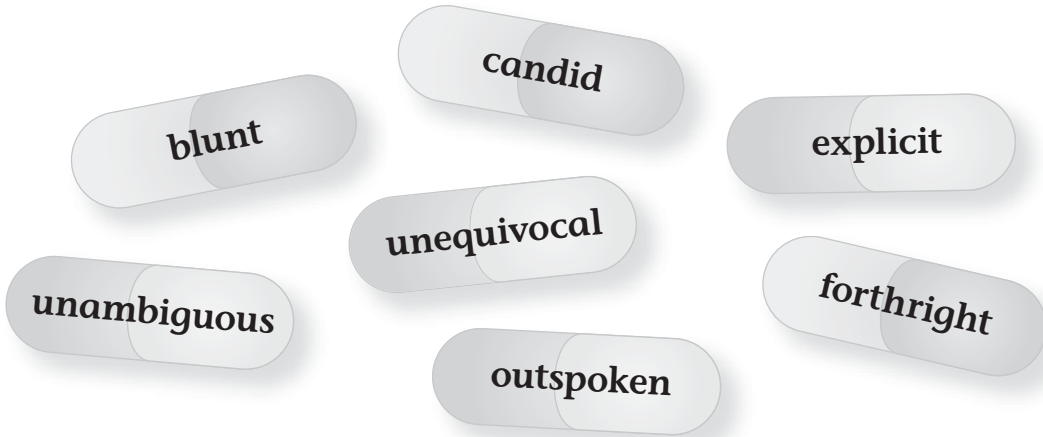
**CURED!**

*The way of the troublemaker is **thorny**.*

AMERICAN UMPQUA INDIAN PROVERB

# direct

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*  
 DEFINITION *honest; straightforward; frank; candid*



## cures for the common word

absolute  
 bald  
**blunt**  
**candid**  
 categorical  
 downright  
**explicit**  
 express  
**forthright**

frank  
 genuine  
 guileless  
 matter-of-fact  
 open  
**outspoken**  
 plain  
 plain-spoken  
 point-blank

sincere  
 straight  
 straightforward  
 truthful  
**unambiguous**  
 unconcealed  
 undisguised  
**unequivocal**  
 unreserved

## CURED!

*He was always smoothing and polishing himself, and in the end he became **blunt** before he was sharp.*

G. C. (GEORG CHRISTOPH) LICHTENBERG

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Betty was very **direct** in all her remarks.

Being *direct* can be considered admirable or impolite, so using a more precise alternative will let us know how we feel about Betty's remarks.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *direct*:

Betty was very \_\_\_\_\_ in all her remarks.

<b>blunt</b>	Betty spoke abruptly, which is not usually considered a positive way to speak.
<b>candid</b>	Betty seemed to speak free from reservation or disguise, meaning she was being honest; candid often has the connotation of the honesty being refreshing.
<b>explicit</b>	Betty fully and clearly expressed her remarks, leaving nothing she thought as merely implied.
<b>forthright</b>	Betty's remarks were characterized by her direct manner or speech, without subtlety or evasion.
<b>outspoken</b>	Betty was free and unreserved in her remarks; <i>outspoken</i> often has a negative connotation.
<b>unambiguous</b>	There was no doubt about what Betty's remarks meant, because they expressed a single, clearly defined meaning.
<b>unequivocal</b>	Betty's remarks were not subject to conditions or exceptions, leaving no doubt about her meaning.

## CURED!

George Orwell's contention was that it is a sure sign of trouble when things can no longer be called by their right names and described in plain, **forthright** speech.

CHRISTOPHER LASCH

PART OF SPEECH	<i>verb</i>
DEFINITION	<i>to perform, execute, carry out</i>



## *cures for the common word*

accomplish  
achieve  
act  
**arrange**  
bring about  
cause  
complete  
conclude  
cook  
**create**  
determine  
discharge  
effect

end  
engage in  
**execute**  
finish  
fix  
fulfill  
get ready  
look after  
make  
make ready  
move  
operate  
**organize**

perform  
perk  
**prepare**  
**produce**  
pull off  
see to  
succeed  
take on  
transact  
**undertake**  
wind up  
work  
wrap up

**CURED!**

*Don't agonize, **organize**.*

FLORYNCE KENNEDY

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

If you want to have a successful event, John at On Board Entertainment can **do** it.

We know that John is the right person to go to, but since the verb *do* can stand in for hundreds of actions, we don't have enough information about John's specific role in the successful event.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *do*:

If you want to have a successful event, John at On Board Entertainment can \_\_\_\_\_ it.

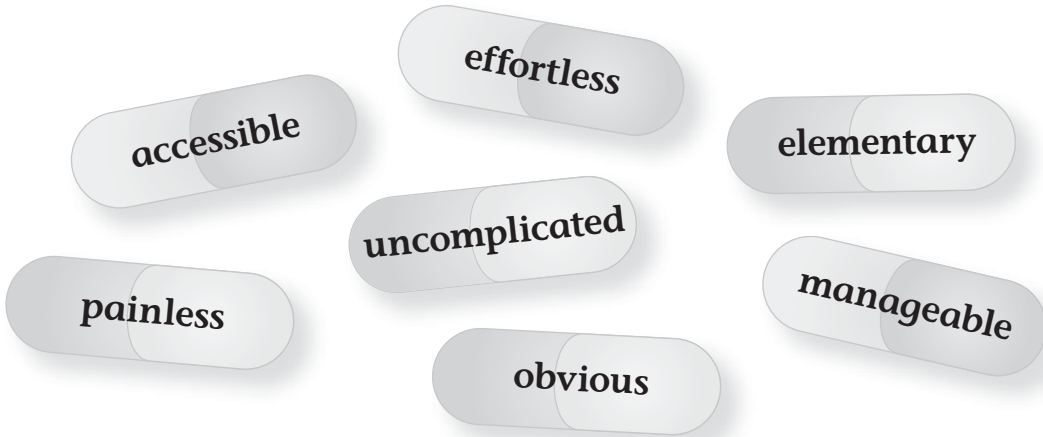
<b>arrange</b>	<i>Arrange</i> can mean that John will plan the overall aspects or the details of the event.
<b>create</b>	The event will evolve from John's own thought and imagination.
<b>execute</b>	John will ensure that the event is carried out in accordance with an established plan—his, the client's, or both.
<b>organize</b>	John will coordinate each of the interdependent parts of the plan for united action—in this case, a successful event.
<b>prepare</b>	John may actually get ready each aspect of the event—from the smallest detail to the largest.
<b>produce</b>	John will supervise the entire event, contributing creatively and possibly also financially.
<b>undertake</b>	John has agreed to take it upon himself to work on this event and is committed to making it a success.

**CURED!**

*The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we **created** them.*

ALBERT EINSTEIN

# easy

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *capable of being accomplished or acquired with ease; posing no difficulty*

## cures for the common word

**accessible**

apparent  
basic  
child's play  
cinch  
clear  
comfortable  
**effortless**  
**elementary**  
evident  
facile  
inconsiderable  
light  
little

**manageable**

manifest  
mere  
natural  
no bother  
no problem  
no sweat  
no trouble  
**obvious**  
**painless**  
paltry  
picnic  
plain  
plain sailing

**pleasant**

pushover  
relaxed  
royal  
simple  
slight  
smooth  
snap  
straightforward  
**uncomplicated**  
undemanding  
uninvolved  
untroublesome  
yielding

## CURED!

*The world is full of **obvious** things which nobody by any chance ever observes.*

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Professor Waddingham made the new math seem **easy**.

Thank goodness someone can make the new math seem easy, but in this sentence we're not sure exactly *how* the professor managed to make it less difficult.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *easy*:

Professor Waddingham made the new math seem \_\_\_\_\_.

<b>accessible</b>	She showed us how to easily approach and use the math.
<b>effortless</b>	She taught us a way to learn the math that required little or no effort.
<b>elementary</b>	She helped us learn by showing us the fundamental and simplest aspects of the math.
<b>manageable</b>	She found a way to make us feel in control of learning the math instead of lost by it.
<b>obvious</b>	She was able to show us the math in a way that we easily understood.
<b>painless</b>	This is an informal way to say that she made learning the math seem like it required little or no hard work.
<b>uncomplicated</b>	She was able to make the math seem simple instead of complex or involved.

**CURED!**

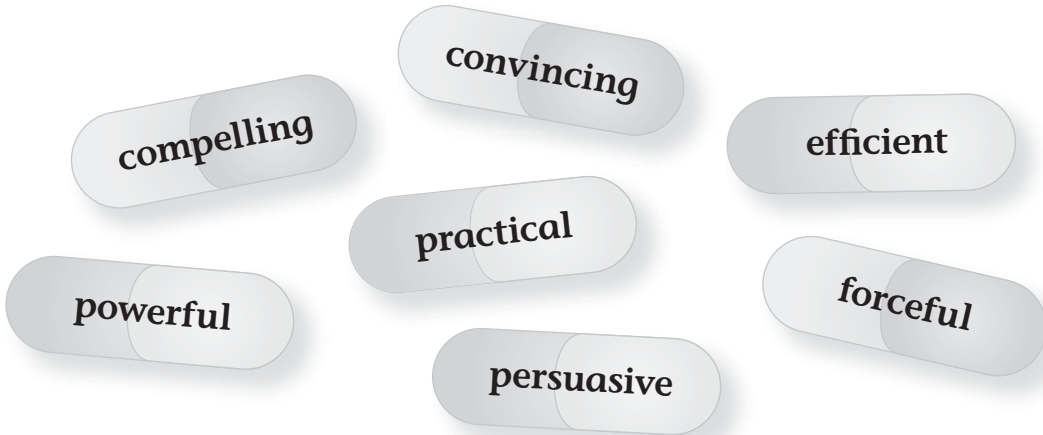
*Suffering, once accepted, loses its edge, for the terror of it lessens, and what remains is generally far more **manageable** than we had imagined.*

LESLEY HAZELTON

# effective

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *producing the intended or expected result; adequate to accomplish a purpose*



## cures for the common word

able  
active  
adequate  
capable  
cogent  
**compelling**  
competent  
**convincing**  
direct  
effectual  
efficacious  
**efficient**  
emphatic

energetic  
**forceful**  
forcible  
impressive  
live  
moving  
operative  
**persuasive**  
potent  
**powerful**  
powerhouse  
**practical**  
producing

resultant  
serviceable  
serving  
sound  
striking  
successful  
sufficient  
telling  
trenchant  
useful  
valid  
virtuous  
yielding

## CURED!

*It's pretty hard to be **efficient** without being obnoxious.*

KIN HUBBARD



DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

The speechwriter used very **effective** language.

We can infer that the language was successful in getting the writer's point across well, or it evoked in the reader the writer's desired effect, but it's not clear how the language was used to accomplish the writer's goal.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *effective*:

The speechwriter used very \_\_\_\_\_ language.

<b>compelling</b>	The language had a powerful and irresistible effect, engaging us to keep reading.
<b>convincing</b>	By the use of argument or evidence, the language brought us to a firm belief the writer intended for us.
<b>efficient</b>	The language functioned in the best possible manner with the least waste of time and effort; however, <i>efficient</i> doesn't lend itself toward a creative feel.
<b>forceful</b>	The writing was powerful and vigorous, as opposed to soft or gentle and coercing.
<b>persuasive</b>	The language was able to persuade us into thinking, seeing, or feeling just as the writer intended.
<b>powerful</b>	The writer used language with great reason, authority, or influence and impacted us—an ideal goal for a speech.
<b>practical</b>	The language used achieved the intended effect, but <i>practical</i> doesn't give the impression of a speech that was outstanding or that moved people to action.

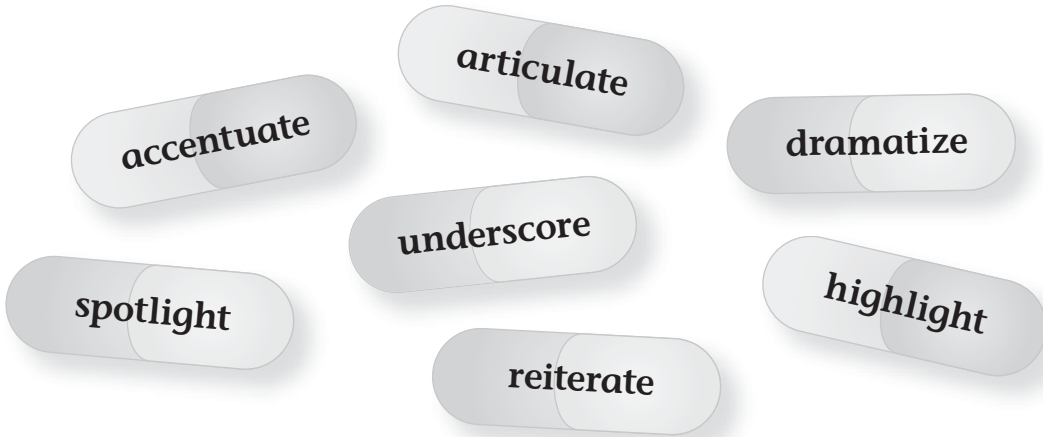
**CURED!**

*Being **powerful** is like being a lady. If you have to tell people you are, you aren't.*

MARGARET THATCHER

# emphasize

PART OF SPEECH	<i>verb</i>
DEFINITION	<i>to lay stress upon; to single out as important</i>



## cures for the common word

accent  
**accentuate**  
 affirm  
**articulate**  
 assert  
 charge  
**dramatize**  
 enlarge  
 enunciate  
 headline  
**highlight**

impress  
 indicate  
 insist on  
 italicize  
 maintain  
 make clear  
 mark  
 pinpoint  
 play up  
 point out  
 press

prioritize  
 pronounce  
 punctuate  
**reiterate**  
 repeat  
 rub in  
 spot  
**spotlight**  
 underline  
**underscore**  
 weight

**CURED!**

*A talent for drama is not a talent for writing, but is an ability to **articulate** human relationships.*

GORE VIDAL

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

**Emphasize** your work experience when applying for a job.

You always want to present yourself at your best when applying for a job, but in this sentence we don't have enough information about *how* exactly to best present your work experience.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *emphasize*:

\_\_\_\_\_ your work experience when applying for a job.

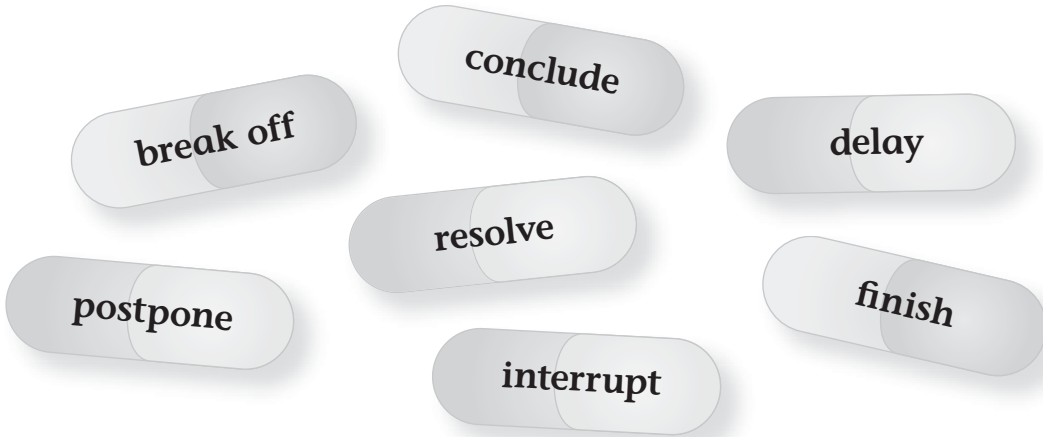
<b>accentuate</b>	In addition to your other qualities, single out your work experience to present as important.
<b>articulate</b>	Formulate what you want to say about your work experience, and express your thoughts with clarity and effectiveness.
<b>dramatize</b>	Represent your work experience vividly, emotionally, or strikingly.
<b>highlight</b>	You want to present all of your positive attributes, but you want your work experience to be the most interesting or memorable part of your application.
<b>reiterate</b>	You want to mention your work experience repeatedly for emphasis.
<b>spotlight</b>	You have so many qualifications for the job, your work experience may be overshadowed, and you want to call particular attention to your experience.
<b>underscore</b>	Especially if you think your work experience is the key to winning the job—or you might not fully have other qualities the company is looking for—give extra weight to your experience.

**CURED!**

Hard work **spotlights** the character of people: some turn up their sleeves, some turn up their noses, and some don't turn up at all.

SAM EWIG

# end

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to come to a conclusion; to terminate or cease*

## cures for the common word

abolish  
abort  
accomplish  
achieve  
**break off**  
break up  
call off  
cease  
close  
close out  
complete  
**conclude**  
consummate  
crown

culminate  
cut short  
**delay**  
determine  
discontinue  
dispose of  
dissolve  
drop  
expire  
**finish**  
get done  
give up  
halt  
**interrupt**

perorate  
**postpone**  
quit  
relinquish  
**resolve**  
settle  
sew up  
shut down  
stop  
terminate  
ultimate  
wind up  
wrap  
wrap up

## CURED!

*Never **interrupt** your enemy when he is making a mistake.*

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

We need to **end** the negotiations today.

Unfortunately, choosing *end* here doesn't give us any inclination as to whether the negotiations will end positively or negatively and successfully or not.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *end*:

We need to \_\_\_\_\_ the negotiations today.

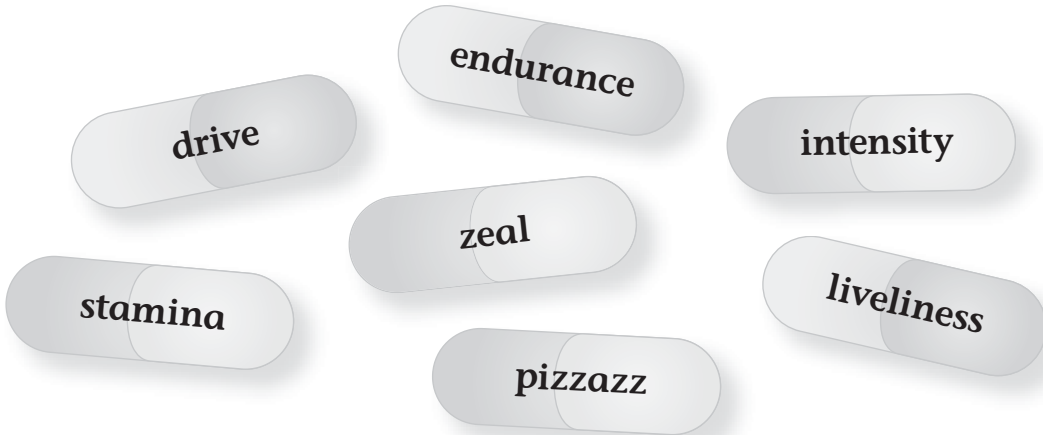
<b>break off</b>	Meaning to “stop suddenly,” <i>break off</i> gives the impression that it was not a positive end of the day for either side in the negotiations.
<b>conclude</b>	The impression is not only that the negotiations will finish but also that the two sides will finally come to a decision or settlement.
<b>delay</b>	The negotiations will be put off to a later time, which may be OK, but sometimes <i>delay</i> can imply someone is hindering the progress.
<b>finish</b>	This is a neutral term—neither positive or negative—to say the two sides need to complete the negotiations.
<b>interrupt</b>	The negotiations will cease before they are complete, and the interruption may be for a reason that is not the fault of either side.
<b>postpone</b>	This indicates delaying the negotiations to another time, but it can also imply that they are delayed because one or both sides find the negotiations less important than originally thought.
<b>resolve</b>	This implies that the negotiators will reach a conclusion after a deliberation—hopefully one that's beneficial and satisfactory to both sides.

**CURED!**

You may *delay*, but time will not.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

# energy

PART OF SPEECH *noun*DEFINITION *the capacity for vigorous activity; abundant available power*

## cures for the common word

animation  
ardor  
brrr  
dash  
**drive**  
dynamism  
élan  
**endurance**  
enterprise  
exertion  
fire  
force  
forcefulness  
fortitude  
get-up-and-go

go  
initiative  
**intensity**  
juice  
life  
**liveliness**  
might  
moxie  
muscle  
pep  
**pizzazz**  
pluck  
potency  
power  
puissance

punch  
spirit  
spontaneity  
**stamina**  
steam  
strength  
toughness  
tuck  
vehemence  
verve  
vigor  
vim  
vitality  
**zeal**  
zest

## CURED!

*Human kindness has never weakened the **stamina** or softened the fiber of a free people. A nation does not have to be cruel to be tough.*

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

Our yoga instructor Rada exhibits boundless **energy**.

The use of *energy* in this sentence doesn't firmly convey what impresses us about Rada—maybe her physical skills, her mental outlook, or her attitude.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *energy*:

Our yoga instructor Rada exhibits boundless \_\_\_\_\_.

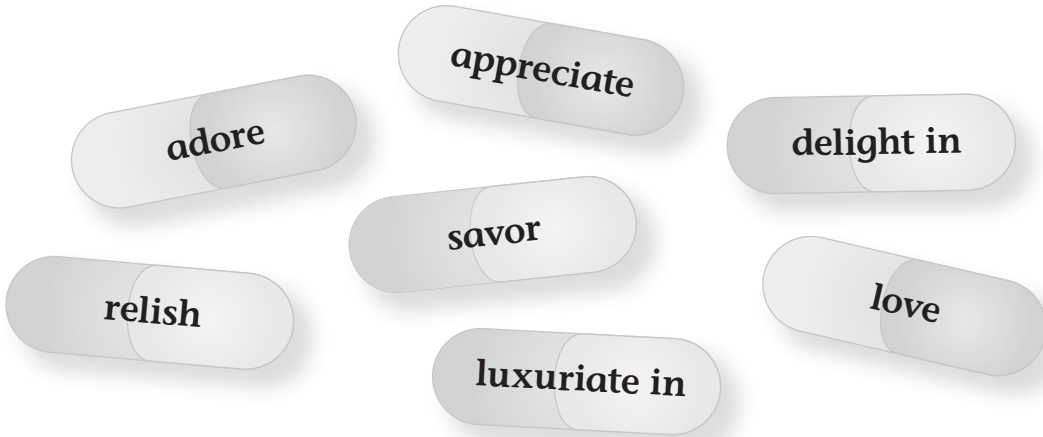
<b>drive</b>	Rada is highly motivated and focused on a course toward her goals.
<b>endurance</b>	Rada has the ability and strength to go on and on, despite fatigue.
<b>intensity</b>	Rada has great energy, strength, and concentration during the yoga class—and likely outside of class also.
<b>liveliness</b>	Rada is animated in her action and expression, which helps keep us all upbeat.
<b>pizzazz</b>	Beyond lively, Rada has a downright dazzling style, flair, and energetic personality.
<b>stamina</b>	Rada has a strength of physical constitution to endure fatigue and just about anything else.
<b>zeal</b>	Rada has such an enthusiastic and tireless devotion to yoga as an ideal, which can be contagious.

CURED!

*Endurance is patience concentrated.*

THOMAS CARLYLE

# enjoy

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to experience joy or satisfaction from; to take pleasure in*

## cures for the common word

**adore****appreciate**

be entertained

be pleased

**delight in**

dig

dote on

drink in

eat up

fancy

flip for

flip over

funk

go

groove on

have fun

like

**love****luxuriate in**

mind

pleasure in

rejoice in

**relish**

revel in

**savor**

savvy

take to

## CURED!

*The trouble with being punctual is that nobody's there to **appreciate** it.*

FRANKLIN P. JONES



DIAGNOSIS *limiting*I **enjoy** a break in my sunny backyard.

Choosing *enjoy* doesn't fully convey how much or why exactly I look forward to this break.

## powerful remedies

Substitute an alternative remedy for *enjoy*:

I \_\_\_\_\_ a break in my sunny backyard.

<b>adore</b>	Choosing <i>adore</i> comes closer to telling you how much I deeply love this escape.
<b>appreciate</b>	I'm grateful to have the time for and I truly value this break in the sunny yard.
<b>delight in</b>	Beyond simply liking my break in the yard, it gives me great joy.
<b>love</b>	Meaning "to like or desire enthusiastically," <i>love</i> is now a casual way to say how much I really, really enjoy my break in the sunny yard.
<b>luxuriate in</b>	This conjures up an image of lounging, reveling in my experience.
<b>relish</b>	This break is so wonderful that I eagerly look forward to it.
<b>savor</b>	I enjoy every minute of my break, knowing it's back to responsibilities when break time is over.

CURED!

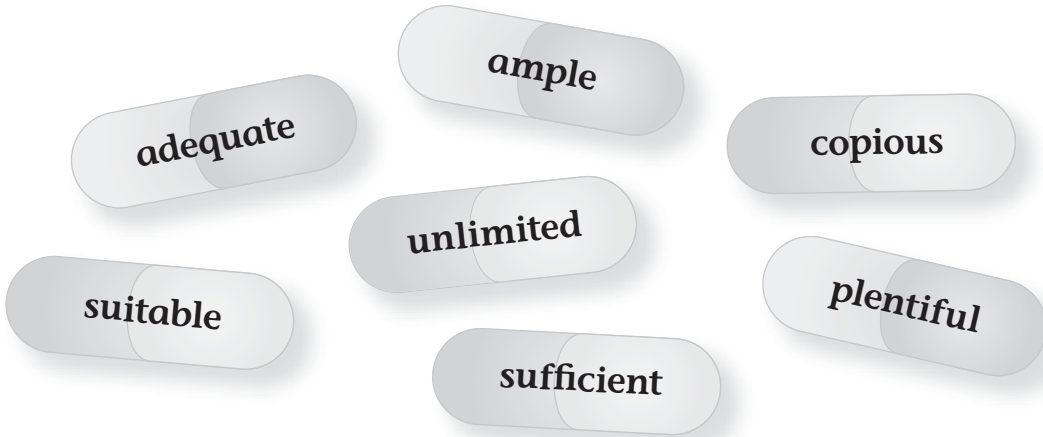
A little nonsense now and then is **relished** by the wisest men.

ROALD DAHL

# enough

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *adequate for the want or need; sufficient for the purpose or to satisfy desire*



## cures for the common word

abundant  
acceptable  
**adequate**  
**ample**  
bellyful  
bounteous  
bountiful  
comfortable  
competent

complete  
**copious**  
decent  
fed up  
full  
had it  
last straw  
lavish  
plenteous

**plentiful**  
replete  
satisfactory  
satisfying  
**sufficient**  
sufficing  
**suitable**  
tolerable  
**unlimited**

## CURED!

*To be witty is not enough. One must possess **sufficient** wit to avoid having too much of it.*

ANDRE MAUROIS

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

We have **enough** earthquake supplies for three people for a week.

In this sentence, *enough* for one person can be starvation (or excess) for others, so choosing a more precise word gives more information—or at least a better indication of how many supplies are stored.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *enough*:

We have \_\_\_\_\_ earthquake supplies for three people for a week.

<b>adequate</b>	We're confident that we have supplies necessary for the basic requirements.
<b>ample</b>	We have more than enough supplies, which means we may be able to accommodate more people or for a longer duration.
<b>copious</b>	We have large quantities of supplies, more than ample, so we can invite in whoever needs help.
<b>plentiful</b>	We have a great quantity of supplies, but perhaps only if we stick to the prescribed number of people and/or duration anticipated.
<b>sufficient</b>	We have a quantity of supplies that can fulfill our need or requirement, but without being abundant.
<b>suitable</b>	Choosing <i>suitable</i> indicates that in addition to a proper amount of supplies, they are ones appropriate to the purpose.
<b>unlimited</b>	Not only do we have supplies immediately available, but we have a resource to provide an infinite amount for as many and as long as we need.

**CURED!**

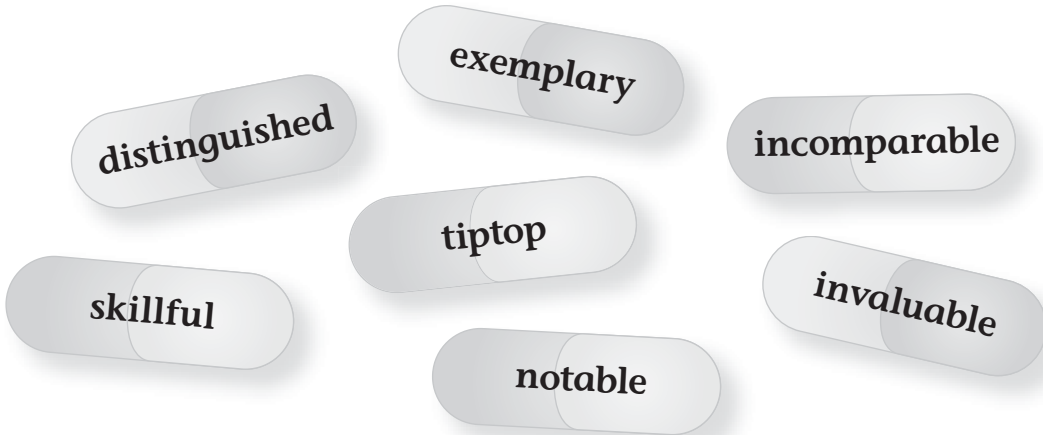
*The supply of words in the world market is **plentiful** but the demand is falling. Let deeds follow words now.*

LECH WALESA

# excellent

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *of the highest or finest quality; exceptionally good of its kind*



## cures for the common word

accomplished  
admirable  
attractive  
champion  
choice  
desirable  
distinctive  
**distinguished**  
estimable  
exceptional  
**exemplary**  
exquisite  
fine  
first  
first-class

first-rate  
good  
great  
high  
**incomparable**  
**invaluable**  
magnificent  
meritorious  
**notable**  
noted  
outstanding  
peerless  
premium  
priceless  
prime

remarkable  
select  
**skillful**  
splendid  
sterling  
striking  
superb  
superior  
superlative  
supreme  
**tiptop**  
top-notch  
transcendent  
unsurpassed  
wonderful

## CURED!

*In every phenomenon the beginning remains always the most **notable** moment.*

THOMAS CARLYLE

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

Katie has proved to be an **excellent** CEO.

When Katie took the position of CEO, we anticipated she would be excellent—an expectation she lived up to—but *excellent* doesn't give us a clear idea of the criteria on which we're basing our assessment.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *excellent*:

Katie has proved to be a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ CEO.

<b>distinguished</b>	Katie stands above others in her character, achievements, and reputation.
<b>exemplary</b>	Katie is commendable and worthy of high praise and imitation.
<b>incomparable</b>	Katie's performance is beyond comparison—matchless and unequalled.
<b>invaluable</b>	Katie has done such a fine job that she has proved to be priceless, and the company would suffer greatly if she ever left.
<b>notable</b>	Katie is worthy of notice because of her outstanding work.
<b>skillful</b>	Katie has shown great knowledge, skill, and aptitude at her position as CEO.
<b>tiptop</b>	This is an informal way to say that Katie's work is of the highest quality.

**CURED!**

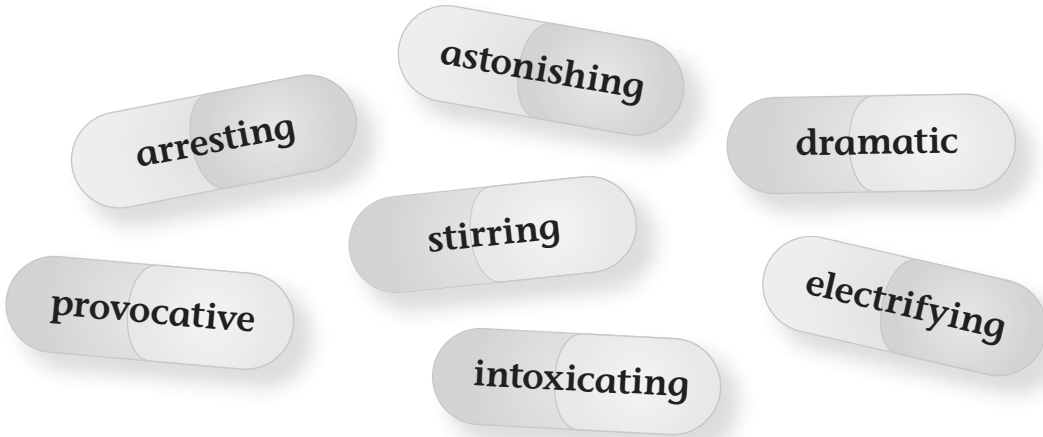
Jackie Robinson, as an athlete and as someone who was trying to make a stand for equality, he was **exemplary**.

KAREEM ABDUL-JABBAR

# exciting

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *producing excitement or strong feeling in; stirring; thrilling; exhilarating*



## cures for the common word

animating  
appealing  
arousing  
**arresting**  
**astonishing**  
bracing  
breathtaking  
dangerous  
**dramatic**  
**electrifying**  
exhilarating  
eye-popping  
far-out  
fine

flashy  
heady  
hectic  
impelling  
impressive  
interesting  
**intoxicating**  
intriguing  
lively  
melodramatic  
mind-blowing  
moving  
neat  
overpowering

overwhelming  
**provocative**  
racy  
rip-roaring  
rousing  
sensational  
showy  
spine-tingling  
stimulating  
**stirring**  
thrilling  
titillating  
wild  
zestful

## CURED!

*Perhaps of all the creations of man language is the most **astonishing**.*

LYTTON STRACHEY

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

President Kennedy was an **exciting** speaker.

Almost anyone who ever heard Kennedy speak—in person or on tape—likely felt strong emotion, but *exciting* doesn't specifically describe how you or I might have been affected by hearing him speak.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *exciting*:

President Kennedy was a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ speaker.

<b>arresting</b>	He had a way of attracting and holding—practically commanding—the attention of a crowd.
<b>astonishing</b>	He was a great and impressive speaker, to the surprise of his detractors.
<b>dramatic</b>	He spoke in a way that was sensational and thrilling.
<b>electrifying</b>	His speaking was sometimes shocking but definitely caused a surge of emotion.
<b>intoxicating</b>	Listening to him speak made people enthusiastic and exhilarated, almost light-headed.
<b>provocative</b>	He sometimes said things that were controversial, tending to stimulate—or provoke—discussion.
<b>stirring</b>	As well as rousing stimulating discussion, he could also rouse people to strong action.

**CURED!**

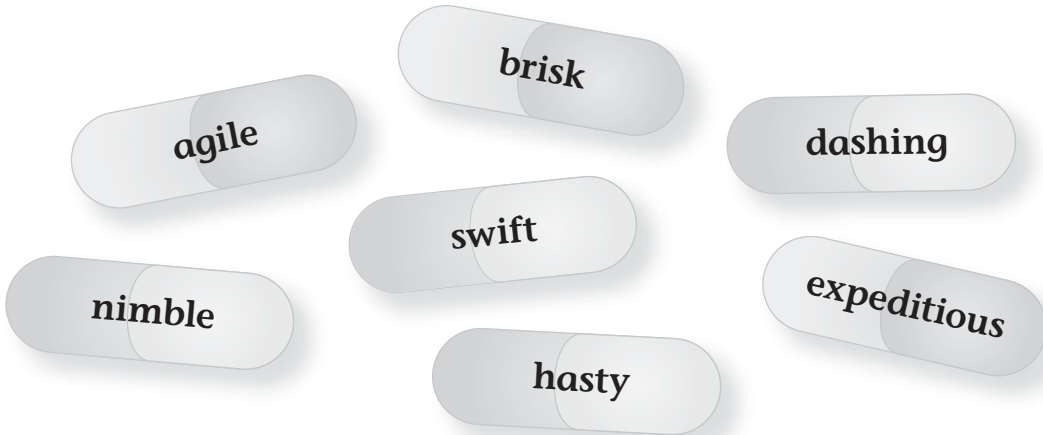
*Beauty is often worse than wine; **intoxicating** both the holder and beholder.*

JOHN ZIMMERMAN

# fast

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *quick; swift; moving or able to move, operate, function, or take effect quickly*



## cures for the common word

accelerated  
active  
**agile**  
breakneck  
**brisk**  
chop-chop  
**dashing**  
double time  
electric  
**expeditious**  
expeditive  
flashing  
fleet

fleeting  
flying  
hair-trigger  
**hasty**  
hot  
hurried  
hypersonic  
instant  
lickety-split  
like crazy  
mercurial  
**nimble**  
PDQ

posthaste  
presto  
pronto  
quick  
racing  
rapid  
ready  
screamin'  
snap  
snappy  
**swift**  
velocious  
winged

## CURED!

*The race is not always to the **swift**, nor the battle to the strong but that's the way to bet.*

DAMON RUNYON



DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Everyone agreed that Boomer ran the dog course at a **fast** pace.

Choosing to use *fast* gives a pretty vivid image of Boomer racing the course, but there are a few instances where *fast* isn't the best way to run a course. The following alternatives tell us more.

## powerful remedies

Substitute an alternative remedy for *fast*:

Everyone agreed that Boomer ran the dog course at  
a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ pace.

<b>agile</b>	Boomer was quick and well coordinated in his movements, and he also displayed an ability to think quickly, reacting well to course changes.
<b>brisk</b>	Boomer's movements were marked by speed and vigor.
<b>dashing</b>	As Boomer ran, he exhibited a spirited and lively energy as well as elegance.
<b>expeditious</b>	Boomer acted with speed and efficiency, though <i>expeditious</i> gives us no clue as to how gracefully he performed.
<b>hasty</b>	Boomer ran fast, but choosing <i>hasty</i> often carries a negative connotation, implying he was unduly quick and rash in his movements and choices.
<b>nimble</b>	Boomer was quick and light on his feet, moving with rapid ease.
<b>swift</b>	Not only was Boomer moving with great speed, acting and reacting quickly and cleverly, <i>swift</i> can also invoke a wonderful image of joy and freedom.

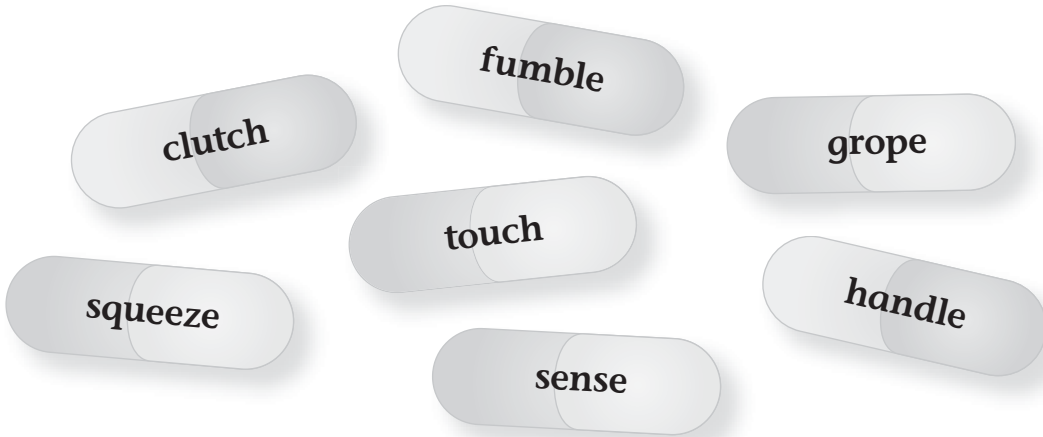
CURED!

One cool judgment is worth a thousand **hasty** counsels. The thing to do is to supply light and not heat.

WOODROW WILSON

# feel

PART OF SPEECH *verb*  
 DEFINITION *to perceive or examine by touch*



## cures for the common word

caress  
 clasp  
**clutch**  
 explore  
 finger  
 fondle  
 frisk  
**fumble**  
 grapple  
 grasp  
 grip

**grobe**  
**handle**  
 manipulate  
 maul  
 palm  
 palpate  
 paw  
 perceive  
 pinch  
 ply  
 poke

press  
**sense**  
**squeeze**  
 stroke  
 test  
 thumb  
 tickle  
**touch**  
 try  
 twiddle  
 wield

## CURED!

*Gentlemen, it is better to have died as a small boy than to **fumble** this football.*

JOHN HEISMAN

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Finally, Eric could **feel** the rescue rope.

Choosing *feel* here doesn't tell us anything about the circumstances of why Eric is feeling for the rope; whereas, the following alternatives give us a much more vivid image of the situation.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *feel*:

Finally, Eric could \_\_\_\_\_ the rescue rope.

<b>clutch</b>	Eric is holding the rope tightly, or attempting to grasp it, indicating he may be about to fall if he doesn't seize it quickly.
<b>fumble</b>	Eric is feeling about clumsily for the rope; perhaps he just can't reach it.
<b>grope</b>	Eric is blindly feeling about with his hands with some uncertainty because he can't see the rope.
<b>handle</b>	Even if the rope might be difficult to grasp, Eric is able to manage it.
<b>sense</b>	Eric has so much experience climbing that he has an intuitive or acquired perception of where the rope is.
<b>squeeze</b>	Eric is able to press the rope gently, maybe just to be sure it's really there if needed.
<b>touch</b>	Eric can feel the rope, and this is more a matter of information than giving us any clue to his situation.

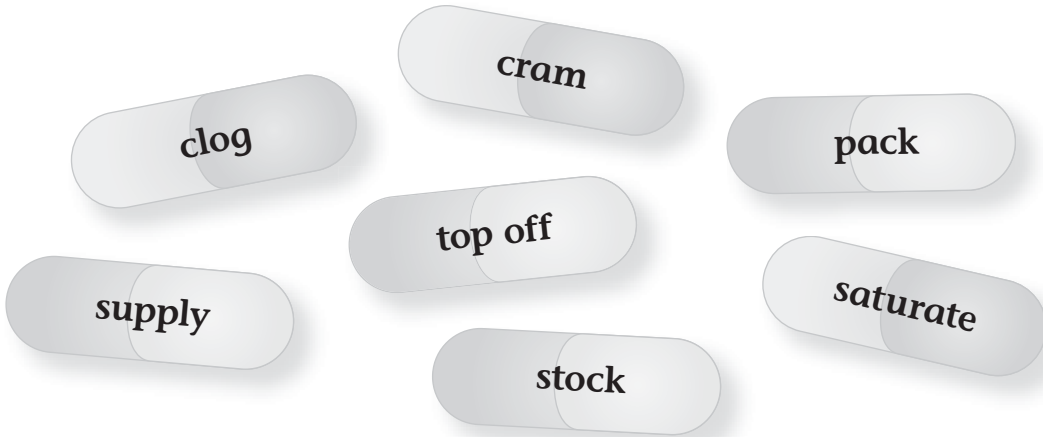
**CURED!**

*Love is blind. That is why he always proceeds by touch.*

FRENCH PROVERB

# fill

PART OF SPEECH	<i>verb</i>
DEFINITION	<i>to occupy to the full capacity</i>



## *cures for the common word*

block  
brim over  
bulge out  
charge  
choke  
**clog**  
close  
congest  
**cram**  
crowd  
distend  
fulfill  
furnish  
glut  
gorge

heap  
impregnate  
inflate  
jam-pack  
lade  
load  
meet  
occupy  
overflow  
**pack**  
permeate  
pervade  
plug  
pump up  
ram

replenish  
sate  
satisfy  
**saturate**  
shoal  
**stock**  
store  
stretch  
stuff  
suffuse  
**supply**  
swell  
take up  
**top off**

## CURED!

*The first forty years of life give us the text; the next thirty **supply** the commentary on it.*

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

The local parks departments **fill** the streams with fish.

We know that fish are being added to the streams, but surprisingly, *fill* doesn't tell us to what degree, nor does it tell us if this is a good or bad thing.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *fill*:

The local parks departments \_\_\_\_\_ the streams with fish.

<b>clog</b>	They put in so many fish that the streams are choked up, and it's hard to swim or boat in them.
<b>cram</b>	They have forced in more fish than the streams can easily hold, which is not healthy for the fish or the environment.
<b>pack</b>	The departments have crowded the fish together, perhaps in one set-off area of each stream.
<b>saturate</b>	This implies that the streams are completely packed, but <i>saturate</i> doesn't carry the same negative connotation as <i>cram</i> .
<b>stock</b>	The parks departments have added fish to the streams to have an appropriate number available.
<b>supply</b>	The departments have added fish to the streams, but the connotation here is that the streams were lacking the requisite amount.
<b>top off</b>	This is an informal term to indicate that the departments added just a few fish, because the streams were almost full to begin with.

**CURED!**

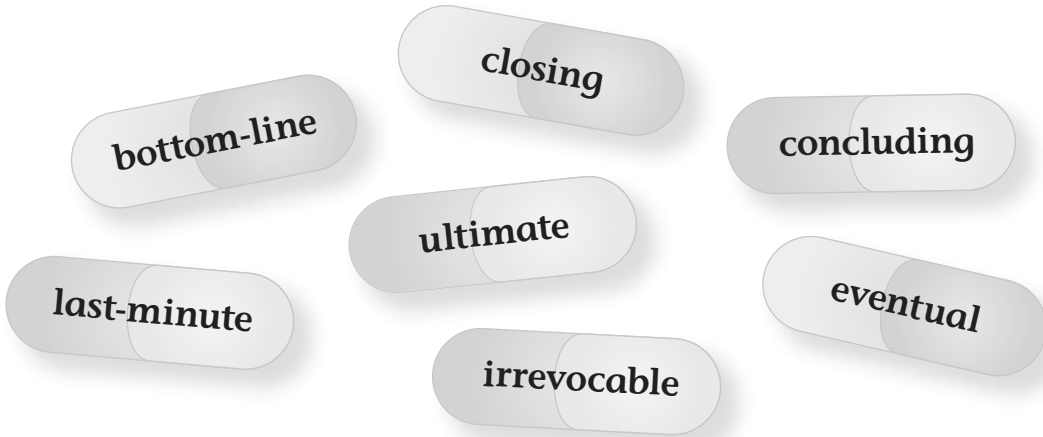
Next to a circus there ain't nothing that **packs** up and tears out faster than the Christmas spirit.

KIN HUBBARD

# final

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *conclusive or decisive; coming to the end; last in place, order, or time*



## *cures for the common word*

absolute  
**bottom-line**  
**closing**  
**concluding**  
crowning  
decided  
decisive  
definite  
definitive  
determinate

determinative  
ending  
**eventual**  
finished  
finishing  
hindmost  
incontrovertible  
irrefutable  
**irrevocable**  
**last-minute**

latest  
latter  
settled  
supreme  
swan song  
terminal  
terminating  
**ultimate**  
unanswerable  
unappealable

## CURED!

*Final thoughts are so, you know, final. Let's call them **closing** words.*

CRAIG ARMSTRONG

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

The company's **final** decision regarding pay increases surprised us.

Though it's clear we were surprised by the decision, *final* doesn't indicate much about what was involved in the decision or how we feel about it.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *final*:

The company's \_\_\_\_\_ decision regarding pay increases surprised us.

<b>bottom-line</b>	Whether we like the decision or not, it isn't going to change.
<b>closing</b>	There were negotiations or discussion on the topic, and the decision concludes those negotiations.
<b>concluding</b>	This implies that the decision was determined by reasoning, and the connotation is that we believe careful consideration was given to the decision.
<b>eventual</b>	Even though we were surprised, we knew a decision was expected at some point due to a process already begun and ongoing.
<b>irrevocable</b>	The company's decision is unalterable, so it cannot be changed or recalled.
<b>last-minute</b>	The company's decision was made just prior to a deadline.
<b>ultimate</b>	The company's decision was the final conclusion, ending a series of discussions.

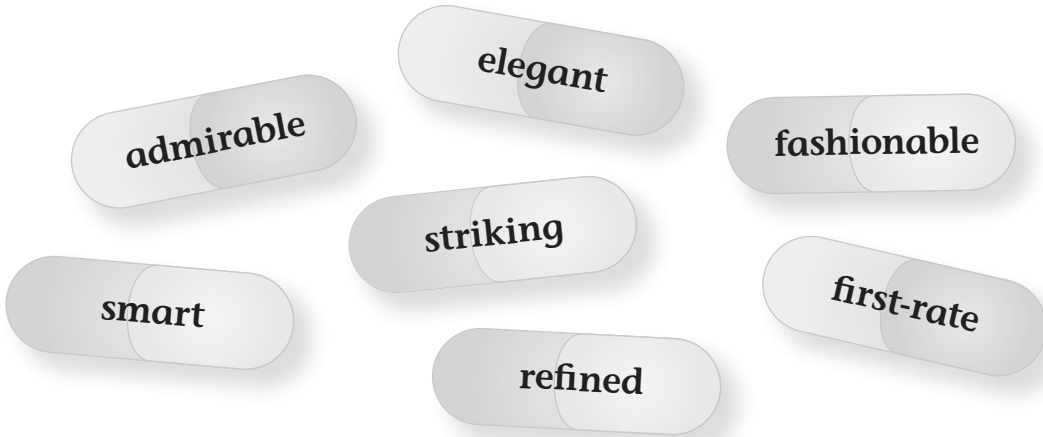
**CURED!**

*It is easy to answer the **ultimate** questions—it saves you bothering with the immediate ones.*

JOHN OSBORNE

# fine

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*  
 DEFINITION *of superior or best quality; excellent*



## cures for the common word

accomplished  
 aces  
**admirable**  
 attractive  
 beautiful  
 capital  
 choice  
 dandy  
**elegant**  
 exceptional  
 expensive  
 exquisite  
**fashionable**

first-class  
**first-rate**  
 five-star  
 good-looking  
 great  
 handsome  
 lovely  
 magnificent  
 ornate  
 outstanding  
 pleasant  
 rare  
**refined**

select  
 showy  
 skillful  
**smart**  
 spiffy  
 splendid  
**striking**  
 subtle  
 superior  
 supreme  
 top-notch  
 well-made  
 wicked

## CURED!

*I sometimes give myself **admirable** advice, but I am incapable of taking it.*

MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU



DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Dorothy's parents thought Ray was a **fine** choice as their daughter's date to the country club dinner.

In this sentence, we're unsure if Dorothy's parents found their daughter's date as merely adequate or an excellent surprise—we need more information.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *fine*:

Dorothy's parents thought Ray was a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ choice as their daughter's date to the country club dinner.

<b>admirable</b>	Ray is a young man who inspires approval and respect—by his character or his actions.
<b>elegant</b>	Ray is gracefully refined and dignified.
<b>fashionable</b>	Ray has a stylish way of dressing.
<b>first-rate</b>	Ray is foremost in quality above other young men Dorothy (or her parents) might have considered as her date.
<b>refined</b>	Ray shows a well-bred character, manner, and feelings.
<b>smart</b>	Ray has a dashing, neat, and trim appearance.
<b>striking</b>	Ray has an impressively attractive appearance.

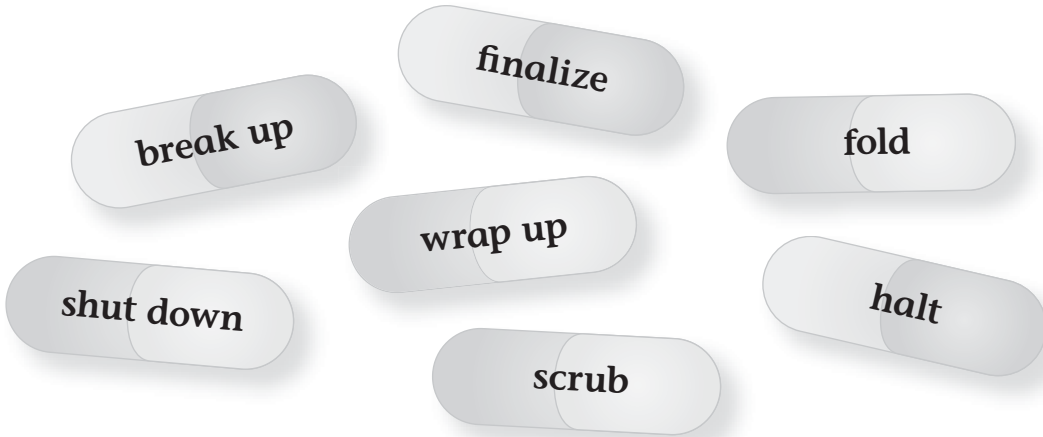
**CURED!**

One of the most **striking** differences between a cat and a lie is that the cat has only nine lives.

MARK TWAIN

# finish

PART OF SPEECH *verb*  
 DEFINITION *to get done*



## cures for the common word

accomplish  
 achieve  
 bag it  
**break up**  
 carry through  
 cease  
 chuck  
 clinch  
 close  
 complete  
 conclude  
 consume  
 cool it

crown  
 culminate  
 deplete  
 determine  
 discharge  
 end  
 execute  
 exhaust  
**finalize**  
**fold**  
 fulfill  
**halt**  
 make

mop up  
 perfect  
 round off  
 scratch  
**scrub**  
 settle  
 sew up  
**shut down**  
 shutter  
 stop  
 terminate  
 wrap  
**wrap up**

## CURED!

*The United Nations is presently unable to **break up** a skirmish between two warring Girl Scout factions, so how they're supposed to aid the world is an even bigger conundrum.*

ARTHUR LOTTI

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Karen and her crew had to **finish** filming at midnight.

Though we know filming had to cease, *finish* doesn't tell us whether the filming was completed or only interrupted.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *finish*:

Karen and her crew had to \_\_\_\_\_ filming at midnight.

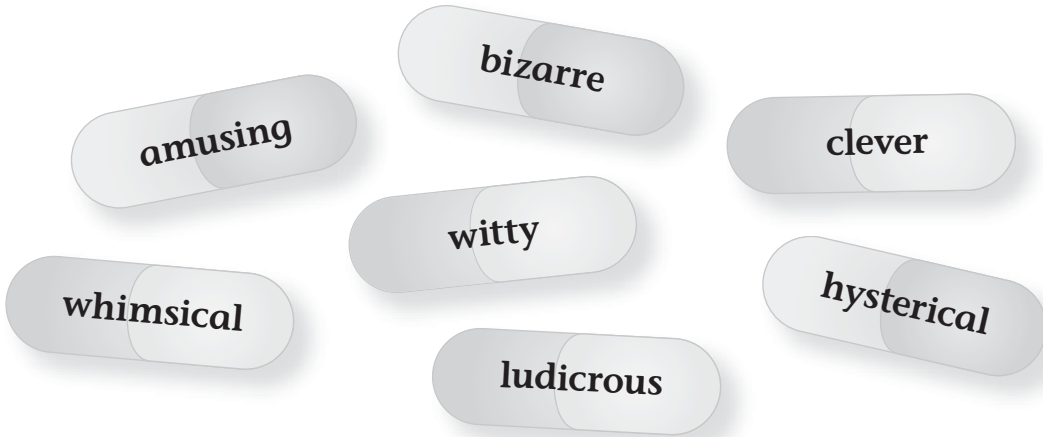
<b>break up</b>	The filming was disrupted for some reason—and not in a good way.
<b>finalize</b>	They were in the process of putting the entire filming of a movie in final form.
<b>fold</b>	This is an informal way to say that they were forced to close down filming.
<b>halt</b>	They had to stop filming for the evening, though we don't know if it's temporarily or permanently.
<b>scrub</b>	This is a slang way to say the filming has been done away with—just plain canceled.
<b>shut down</b>	This is a more traditional way of saying the filming was ended but not completed.
<b>wrap up</b>	This is the movie and TV term for completing the filming of the final scene.

**CURED!**

*We are not so much concerned if you are slow as when you come to a **halt**.*

CHINESE PROVERB

# funny

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *humorous; causing amusement or laughter; comical*

## cures for the common word

absurd  
**amusing**  
 antic  
 a scream  
**bizarre**  
 blithe  
 capricious  
**clever**  
 comical  
 diverting  
 droll  
 entertaining  
 facetious  
 farcical

gay  
 good-humored  
 hilarious  
 humorous  
**hysterical**  
 jocular  
 joking  
 jolly  
 killing  
 knee-slapping  
 laughable  
**ludicrous**  
 merry  
 mirthful

playful  
 priceless  
 rich  
 ridiculous  
 riotous  
 risible  
 side-splitting  
 silly  
 slapstick  
 sportive  
 uncommon  
 unusual  
**whimsical**  
**witty**

## CURED!

*The desire to seem **clever** often keeps us from being so.*

FRANÇOIS VI DUKE (DUC) DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

Michael told us a **funny** story.

In this sentence, *funny* doesn't tell us what exactly was funny about Michael's story—whether it made us laugh, was unusual, or something different.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *funny*:

Michael told us a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ story.

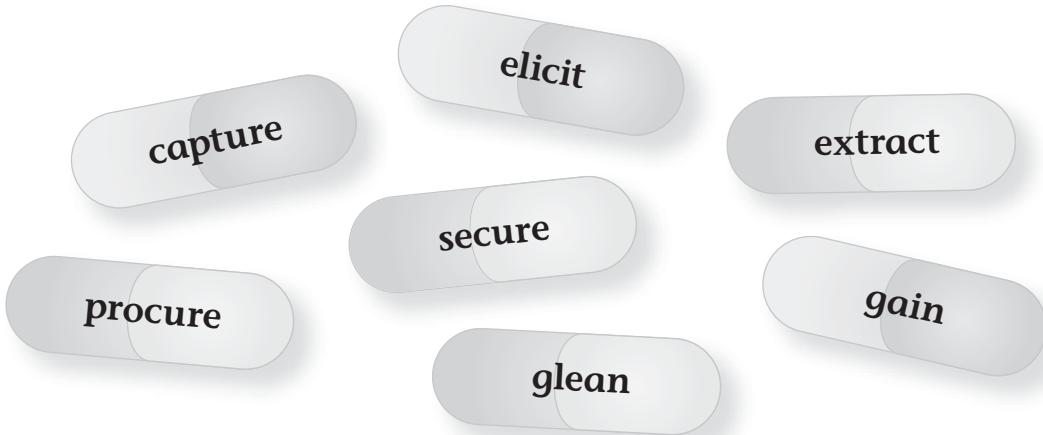
<b>amusing</b>	The story was entertaining or diverting, so it raised a smile but wasn't uproarious.
<b>bizarre</b>	The story was strikingly unconventional and far-fetched, and it led us to wonder if it was true or not.
<b>clever</b>	The details or plot of the story were original, and the connotation is that the story was intriguing.
<b>hysterical</b>	The story was so extremely funny we were laughing uncontrollably.
<b>ludicrous</b>	The story was laughable because of some obvious absurdity or incongruity.
<b>whimsical</b>	The story was lighthearted and given to whimsy or fancy.
<b>witty</b>	The story was quick and clever in its amusing insights.

**CURED!**

A *witty* saying proves nothing.

FRANÇOIS-MARIE AROUET VOLTAIRE

# get

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to come into possession or use of; to acquire as a result of action or effort*

## cures for the common word

access  
accomplish  
achieve  
acquire  
annex  
attain  
bag  
build up  
buy out  
**capture**  
clean up  
come by  
cop  
draw  
earn

educate  
**elicit**  
evoke  
extort  
**extract**  
fetch  
**gain**  
**glean**  
grab  
inherit  
land  
lock up  
make  
net  
obtain

parlay  
pick up  
**procure**  
pull  
rack up  
realize  
reap  
receive  
score  
**secure**  
snag  
snap up  
take  
wangle  
win

## CURED!

*The good we **secure** for ourselves is precarious and uncertain—until it is secured for all of us and incorporated into our common life.*

JANE ADDAMS

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

I'd like to **get** more information from the president before I accept his proposal.

We're unsure of the nature of the proposal as well as how to go about getting more information from the president.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *get*:

I'd like to \_\_\_\_\_ more information from the president before I accept his proposal.

<b>capture</b>	In a different context, this might mean obtaining the information by force or skill, but now it can also imply that I'm going to gather or record the information from different sources.
<b>elicit</b>	I'm going to draw the information from somewhere or someone, which still has a negative connotation.
<b>extract</b>	Though this might indicate drawing out by force, it can also mean to deduce or interpret information based on several factors.
<b>gain</b>	I'm going to acquire the information by my devoted research.
<b>glean</b>	I'm discovering information, a little at a time, from being alert to different resources I've investigated or things people have said.
<b>procure</b>	I'm going to obtain the information by some special means; the connotation is that it may be by unscrupulous and indirect means.
<b>secure</b>	I'm going to get possession of information from a dependable source.

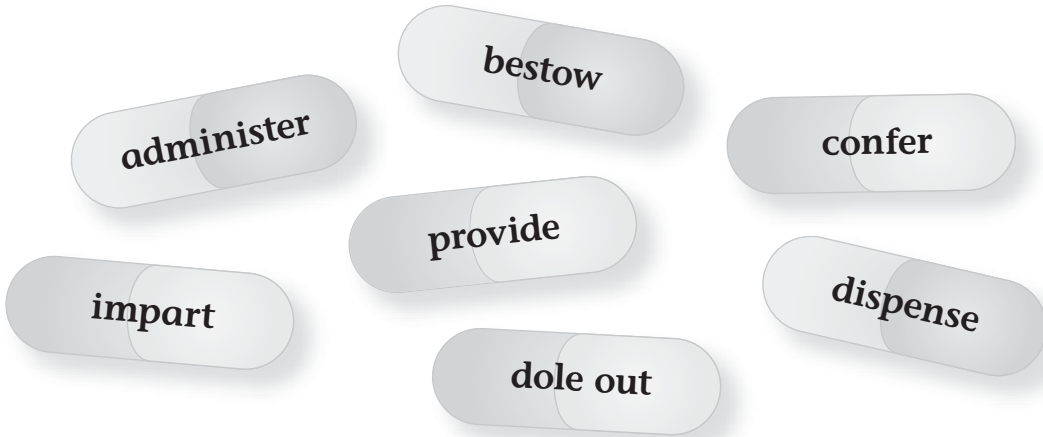
**CURED!**

Who has confidence in himself will **gain** the confidence of others.

LEIB LAZAROW

# give

PART OF SPEECH *verb*  
 DEFINITION *to impart or communicate*



## cures for the common word

accord  
**administer**  
 ante up  
 award  
 bequeath  
**bestow**  
 cede  
 commit  
**confer**  
 consign  
 convey  
 deed  
 deliver  
 dish out  
**dispense**

distribute  
**dole out**  
 donate  
 endow  
 entrust  
 fork over  
 furnish  
 grant  
 hand  
**impart**  
 lease  
 let have  
 parcel out  
 part with  
 pass out

permit  
 pony up  
 present  
**provide**  
 relinquish  
 remit  
 sell  
 shell out  
 subsidize  
 supply  
 throw in  
 transfer  
 transmit  
 vouchsafe  
 will

## CURED!

*Sometimes I need what only you can **provide**—your absence.*

ASHLEIGH BRILLIANT



DIAGNOSIS *limiting***Give** advice sparingly.

This is usually a good idea, but choosing *give* is very neutral, and doesn't tell us much about the intent behind the advice given and the reaction of the advisee.

*powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *give*:

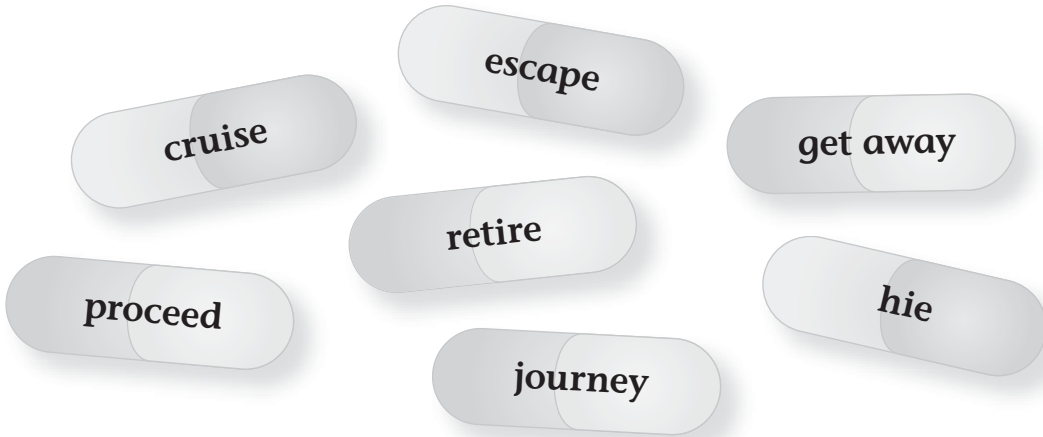
\_\_\_\_\_ advice sparingly.

<b>administer</b>	The advice is intended to contribute assistance, perhaps in a formal way.
<b>bestow</b>	The advice is being presented as a gift—or that is the intention of the giver, even if the receiver may not feel that way.
<b>confer</b>	The advice is being offered as a favor or honor, which may or may not be received with appreciation.
<b>dispense</b>	The advice is being distributed in parts or portions and has a connotation of being given without much emotion.
<b>dole out</b>	This is an informal way of saying the advice will be given in portions.
<b>impart</b>	Meaning “to tell, relate, and pass down,” <i>impart</i> gives the sense of someone wise and knowledgeable sharing their wisdom—and it's gratefully received.
<b>provide</b>	The advice—almost like simple facts and information—is made available.

**CURED!**

People who have given us their complete confidence believe that they have a right to ours. The inference is false; a gift **confers** no rights.

FRIEDRICH WILHELM NIETZSCHE

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to move or proceed, especially to or from something*

## *cures for the common word*

abscond  
advance  
approach  
beat it  
bug out  
**cruise**  
decamp  
depart  
**escape**  
exit  
fare  
flee  
fly  
**get away**

get going  
**hie**  
hightail  
**journey**  
lam  
leave  
light out  
mosey  
move  
pass  
**proceed**  
progress  
pull out  
push on

quit  
repair  
**retire**  
run away  
shove off  
skip out  
split  
take flight  
take off  
tool  
travel  
vamoose  
wend  
withdraw

## *CURED!*

*In what other business can a guy my age drink martinis, smoke cigars and sing? I think all people who **retire** ought to go into show business. I've been retired all my life.*

GEORGE BURNS

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

In the morning, we'll **go** to the tropical island by boat.

Choosing *go* for this sentence doesn't give us much information about the speed or urgency of our journey or the motivations for it.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *go*:

In the morning, we'll \_\_\_\_\_ to the tropical island by boat.

<b>cruise</b>	This gives us the feeling of a leisurely pleasure trip to the island.
<b>escape</b>	We are going to slip away to that tropical refuge, probably from the daily routine or problems we'd like a break from.
<b>get away</b>	We're going to take a vacation to the island.
<b>hie</b>	We're in a hurry to get to the sunny beaches on that island.
<b>journey</b>	Beyond heading for our destination, we're going to take our time as we go the long distance.
<b>proceed</b>	We're heading to the island, after an interruption of our trip.
<b>retire</b>	This implies we are going to the island for some privacy—or are now going to be enjoying a work-free life.

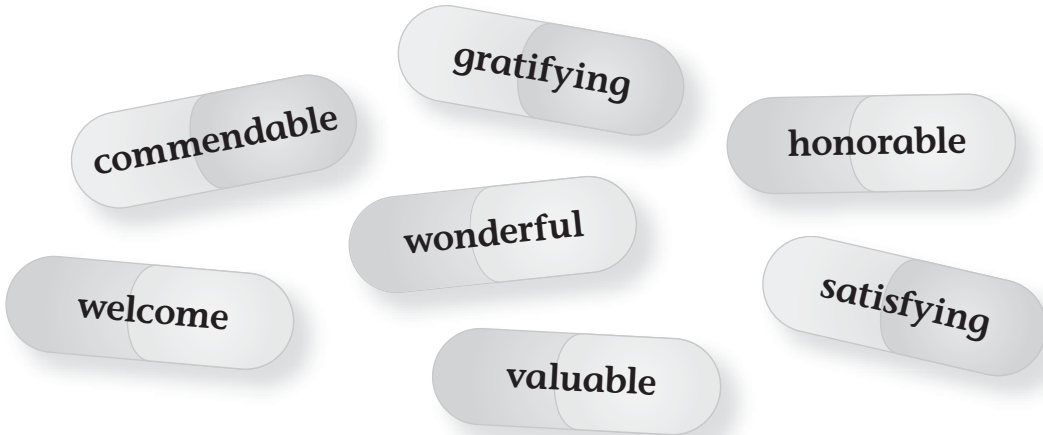
**CURED!**

*To travel is to take a **journey** into yourself.*

DENA KAYE

# good

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*  
 DEFINITION *pleasant; enjoyable*



## cures for the common word

acceptable  
 ace  
 admirable  
 agreeable  
 bully  
 capital  
 choice  
**commendable**  
 competent  
 congenial  
 deluxe  
 excellent  
 exceptional  
 favorable

first-class  
 functional  
**gratifying**  
 great  
**honorable**  
 marvelous  
 nice  
 pleasing  
 positive  
 precious  
 prime  
 reputable  
**satisfying**  
 select

serviceable  
 shipshape  
 sound  
 spanking  
 splendid  
 sterling  
 stupendous  
 super  
 superb  
 superior  
 tip-top  
**valuable**  
**welcome**  
**wonderful**

## CURED!

Say encouraging words to young people, make them feel **welcome** on the planet Earth (many do not). Show by example that we don't need all we have in order to be happy and productive.

PAUL LUTUS

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

Volunteering gives most people a **good** feeling.

It's true that most people feel they receive more from volunteering than they give, but *good* doesn't adequately express how volunteering makes most people feel.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *good*:

Volunteering gives most people a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ feeling.

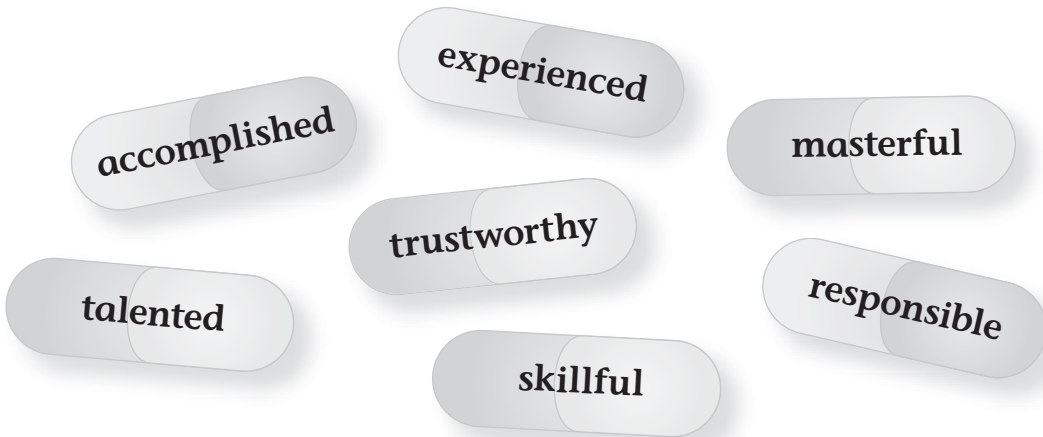
<b>commendable</b>	Our volunteering is perceived by others as praiseworthy.
<b>gratifying</b>	Volunteering gives us a pleasing feeling of satisfaction.
<b>honorable</b>	We feel we are doing something creditable based on high principles and character.
<b>satisfying</b>	Our volunteering fulfills our expectations, giving a sense of full contentment.
<b>valuable</b>	We feel we're contributing in a helpful way, one we hope is worthy of respect.
<b>welcome</b>	Volunteering gives us an agreeable feeling of pleasure or satisfaction—a feeling maybe we don't often experience.
<b>wonderful</b>	Volunteering is beyond good, it's great, excellent, marvelous—so true.

**CURED!**

Education is a **wonderful** thing. If you couldn't sign your name you'd have to pay cash.

RITA MAE BROWN

# good

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *having the qualities that are desirable or distinguishing in a particular thing; skilled*

## cures for the common word

able  
**accomplished**  
 adept  
 adroit  
 au fait  
 capable  
 clever  
 competent  
 dexterous  
 efficient

**experienced**  
 expert  
 first-rate  
**masterful**  
 proficient  
 proper  
 qualified  
 reliable  
**responsible**  
 satisfactory

serviceable  
**skillful**  
 suitable  
 suited  
**talented**  
 thorough  
 trained  
**trustworthy**  
 useful  
 wicked

## CURED!

***Responsible** artists try to affect you sensually in a way that enlarges your experience.*

PAULINE KAEI

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

Jack is a **good** canoe builder.

In this sentence, we understand that Jack is capable of building an outrigger, but it doesn't give us a clear idea of the extent of his training and skills.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *good*:

Jack is a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ canoe builder.

<b>accomplished</b>	Jack is good at what he does as the result of his practice or training, and the implication is that his work is much above average.
<b>experienced</b>	Jack's skill or wisdom comes through his experience.
<b>masterful</b>	Jack's skills are beyond good, having and reflecting the power and skill of a master.
<b>responsible</b>	Without indicating his skill level, Jack has shown that we can depend on him in terms of honesty in his work and his dealings with us.
<b>skillful</b>	Jack is very good at his trade.
<b>talented</b>	Beyond skilled, Jack is creative or artistic in his work.
<b>trustworthy</b>	Jack's skills and performance are deserving of trust or confidence.

**CURED!**

*The only way to make a man **trustworthy** is to trust him.*

HENRY STIMSON

# great

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *important; eminent; distinguished; remarkable or outstanding*

## cures for the common word

august  
 capital  
 celebrated  
 chief  
**commanding**  
 dignified  
**distinguished**  
 eminent  
 exalted  
 excellent  
 famous  
 glorious  
 grand  
**heroic**

**highly regarded**  
 honorable  
**idealistic**  
 illustrious  
 impressive  
 leading  
 lofty  
 lordly  
**magnanimous**  
 major  
 noble  
 notable  
 noted  
 outstanding

paramount  
 primary  
 principal  
 prominent  
 puissant  
 regal  
 remarkable  
 renowned  
 royal  
 stately  
 sublime  
 superior  
 superlative  
**talented**

## CURED!

The most **heroic** word in all languages is revolution.

EUGENE DEBS



DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

As a **great** leader, Nelson Mandela listens as well as he speaks.

In this sentence, *great* doesn't give us enough information to explain why Nelson Mandela is so highly thought of.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *great*:

As a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ leader, Nelson Mandela listens as well as he speaks.

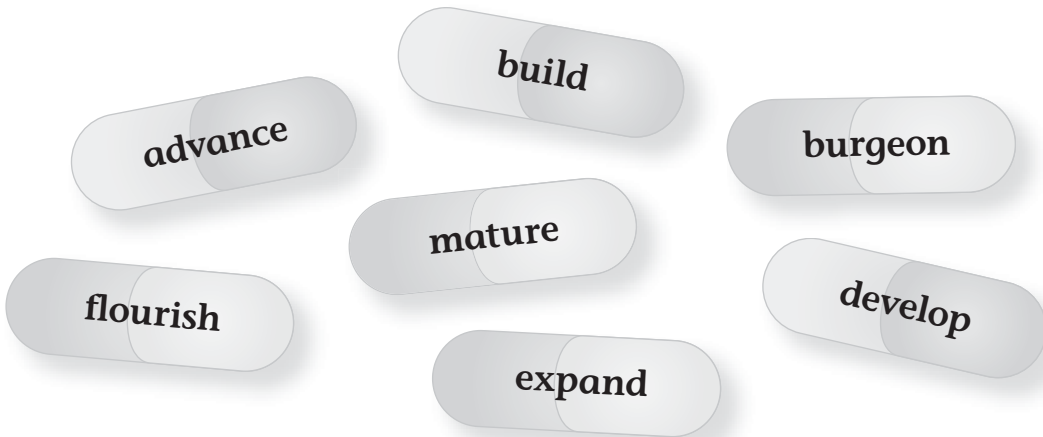
<b>commanding</b>	President Mandela has an imposing and authoritative presence.
<b>distinguished</b>	President Mandela is a wise man of great dignity, as well as an eminent and distinctive leader, as evidenced in part by his great accomplishments.
<b>heroic</b>	President Mandela has displayed the character and attributes of a hero, showing his boldness and daring under extreme measures.
<b>highly regarded</b>	President Mandela is held in high esteem and respect.
<b>idealistic</b>	President Mandela's beliefs are of high and noble principles, though <i>idealistic</i> can carry a connotation of unrealistic.
<b>magnanimous</b>	President Mandela is generous in his forgiving of insult and injury, free from petty resentment or vindictiveness.
<b>talented</b>	President Mandela exhibits special skills and abilities.

**CURED!**

Nothing is more **idealistic** than a journalist on the defensive.

MELVIN MADDOCKS

# grow

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to expand or increase gradually by concerted effort*

## cures for the common word

abound  
**advance**  
 age  
 amplify  
 arise  
 augment  
 breed  
**build**  
**burgeon**  
 cultivate  
**develop**  
 dilate  
 enlarge  
**expand**  
 extend

fill out  
**flourish**  
 gain  
 germinate  
 heighten  
 increase  
 issue  
 luxuriate  
 mature  
**mature**  
 mount  
 multiply  
 originate  
 produce  
 propagate

pullulate  
 raise  
 ripen  
 rise  
 shoot  
 spread  
 sprout  
 stem  
 stretch  
 swell  
 thicken  
 thrive  
 turn  
 wax  
 widen

## CURED!

*I hate the man who **builds** his name on the ruins of another's fame.*

JOHN GAY

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

In going back to school, Christine knows both her knowledge and experience will **grow**.

We know that Christine's growth will be a positive experience, but *grow* doesn't clearly tell us what she is hoping for.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *grow*:

In going back to school, Christine knows both her knowledge and experience will \_\_\_\_\_.

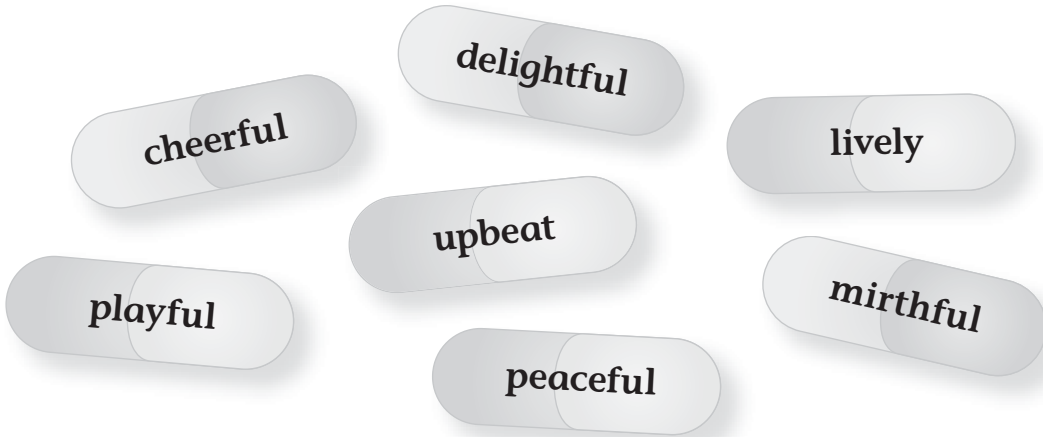
<b>advance</b>	Christine knows her education will move her forward in life.
<b>build</b>	Christine realizes her knowledge and experience will increase and strengthen.
<b>burgeon</b>	This implies Christine's knowledge and experience will develop quickly.
<b>develop</b>	Christine is hoping to build her skills to a more advanced level.
<b>expand</b>	Christine realizes she is extending both the volume and the scope of her knowledge.
<b>flourish</b>	Christine's hoping she'll thrive in a period of her highest productivity.
<b>mature</b>	Christine believes her knowledge and experience will evolve toward fuller development.

**CURED!**

*You can't say civilization don't **advance** . . . in every war they kill you in a new way.*

WILL ROGERS

# happy

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *enjoying or showing joy or pleasure or good fortune*

## cures for the common word

blessed  
blissful  
blithe  
captivated  
**cheerful**  
chipper  
content  
convivial  
delighted  
**delightful**  
ecstatic  
elated  
exultant  
flying high

gay  
glad  
gleeful  
gratified  
hopped up  
intoxicated  
jolly  
joyous  
jubilant  
laughing  
light  
**lively**  
merry  
**mirthful**

overjoyed  
**peaceful**  
peppy  
perky  
**playful**  
pleasant  
pleased  
satisfied  
sparkling  
sunny  
thrilled  
tickled pink  
up  
**upbeat**

## CURED!

*To be seventy years young is sometimes far more **cheerful** and hopeful than to be forty years old.*

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES JR.

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

My granddaughter Taevin is such a **happy** child.

In this sentence, *happy* is just too mild a word and not expressive enough to tell us the ways Taevin displays her happiness.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *happy*:

My granddaughter Taevin is such a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ child.

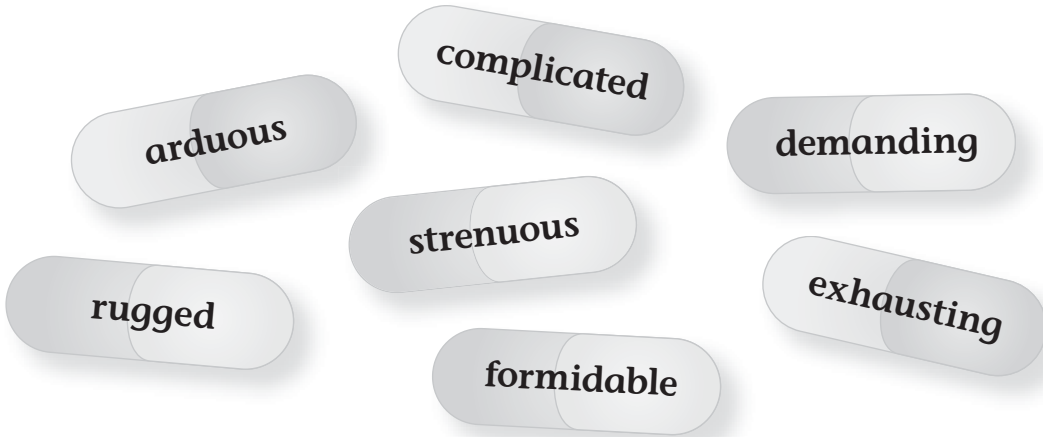
<b>cheerful</b>	She is always in good spirits.
<b>delightful</b>	She gives us all great pleasure and delight and is very entertaining.
<b>lively</b>	She is full of life and vital energy—and very active.
<b>mirthful</b>	She is full of gladness and gaiety, so joyous.
<b>peaceful</b>	She is rarely argumentative or quarrelsome.
<b>playful</b>	She loves to play and have fun—and can find play in the simplest of things.
<b>upbeat</b>	She is happy, cheerful, and optimistic.

**CURED!**

*Make the expectations **lively** enough, and action will follow.*

MASON COOLEY

# hard

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *difficult to do or accomplish; fatiguing; troublesome*

## cures for the common word

**arduous**

backbreaking  
ball-breaking  
bothersome  
burdensome  
complex  
**complicated**  
**demanding**  
distressing  
exacting  
**exhausting**  
fatiguing  
**formidable**  
grinding  
hairly

**harsh**

heavy  
herculean  
intricate  
involved  
irksome  
knotty  
laborious  
mean  
merciless  
murderous  
onerous  
operose  
rigorous  
rough

**rugged**

scabrous  
serious  
severe  
slavish  
sticky  
**strenuous**  
terrible  
tiring  
toilsome  
tough  
troublesome  
unsparing  
wearing  
wearisome

## CURED!

*In ballet a **complicated** story is impossible to tell. . . . We can't dance synonyms.*

GEORGE BALANCHINE

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

The **hard** hike up Mount Tam took us the whole day.

We can't tell from the use of *hard* if the hike was more than we would have hoped for or a welcome challenge.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *hard*:

The \_\_\_\_\_ hike up Mount Tam took us the whole day.

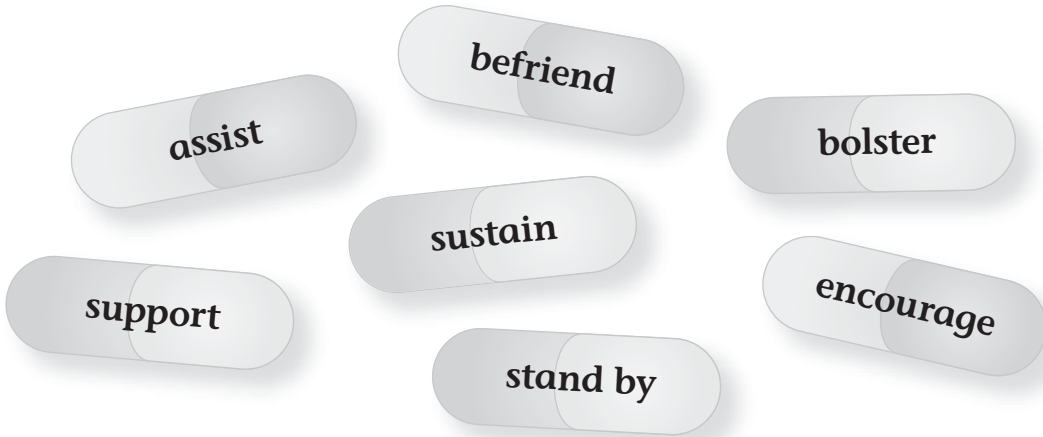
<b>arduous</b>	The hike was laborious and steep and required great exertion.
<b>complicated</b>	The hike had aspects that were elaborate, complex, and intricate.
<b>demanding</b>	The hike called for more intensive effort, attention, and skill than we expected.
<b>exhausting</b>	By the end of the hike, we were extremely fatigued and weary.
<b>formidable</b>	The hike proved to be somewhat discouraging because of Mount Tam's intimidating size and difficulty.
<b>rugged</b>	The terrain was rocky or hilly, with jagged surfaces.
<b>strenuous</b>	The hike was characterized by vigorous exertion, but the connotation is that it was a positive and enjoyable workout.

**CURED!**

Golf seems to be an **arduous** way to go for a walk. I prefer to take the dogs out.

PRINCESS ANNE

# help

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to give aid; to be of service or advantage; to assist*

## cures for the common word

abet  
accommodate  
advocate  
aid  
**assist**  
back  
ballyhoo  
**befriend**  
benefit  
**bolster**  
boost  
buck up  
cheer

cooperate  
**encourage**  
endorse  
further  
intercede  
maintain  
open doors  
patronize  
plug  
promote  
prop  
puff  
push

relieve  
root for  
sanction  
save  
second  
serve  
**stand by**  
stimulate  
stump for  
succor  
**support**  
**sustain**  
uphold

## CURED!

*We all of us need assistance. Those who **sustain** others themselves want to be **sustained**.*

MAURICE HULST



DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Helga was kind enough to **help** me through a tough time.

*Help* can come in many ways, and *help* doesn't tell us much about the ways Helga's showed her kindness.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *help*:

Helga was kind enough to \_\_\_\_\_ me through a tough time.

<b>assist</b>	Helga offered me aid—financially, emotionally, and in other ways.
<b>befriend</b>	Helga and I weren't as close before this tough time, and now she's become much more friendly.
<b>bolster</b>	I was a little shaky, and Helga offered me her strength—she was someone to lean on.
<b>encourage</b>	Helga has inspired me with courage, spirit, and confidence.
<b>stand by</b>	Even when things got really rough, I knew I could rely on Helga.
<b>support</b>	Helga not only offered me financial aid but also held me up emotionally.
<b>sustain</b>	Helga helped me keep going without either of us giving way or yielding to how tough the time was.

**CURED!**

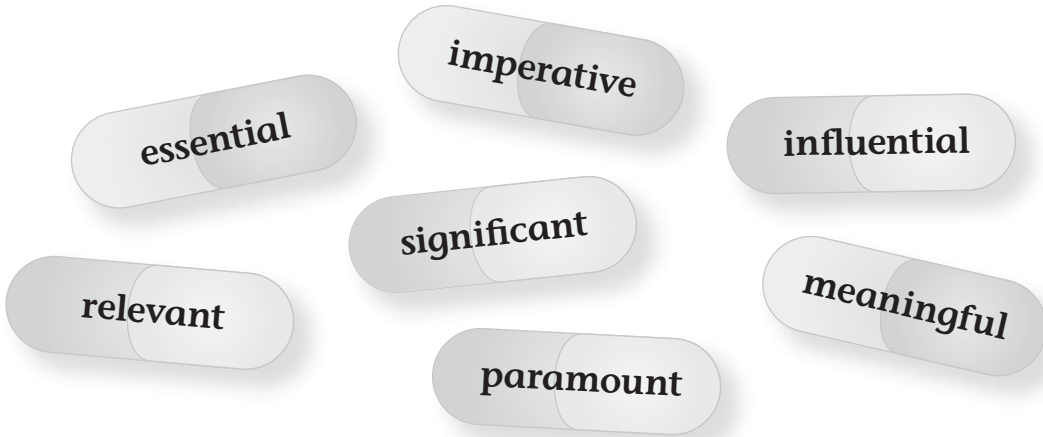
*A government that robs Peter to pay Paul can always depend on the **support** of Paul.*

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

# important

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *substantial; of much or great significance or consequence*



## cures for the common word

big-league  
chief  
considerable  
conspicuous  
critical  
crucial  
decisive  
earnest  
**essential**  
exceptional  
exigent  
extensive  
far-reaching  
foremost  
front-page

grave  
great  
heavy  
**imperative**  
importunate  
**influential**  
large  
marked  
material  
**meaningful**  
momentous  
notable  
of note  
of substance  
**paramount**

ponderous  
pressing  
primary  
principal  
**relevant**  
salient  
serious  
signal  
**significant**  
something  
standout  
substantial  
urgent  
vital  
weighty

## CURED!

*Only Irish Coffee provides in a single glass all four **essential** food groups: alcohol, caffeine, sugar, fat.*

ALEX LEVINE

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

Community approval of the new clinic is **important** to the developer.

We can't tell from the use of *important* in this sentence if the approval is something the developer cares about or if it's required for construction of the new clinic.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *important*:

Community approval of the new clinic is \_\_\_\_\_ to the developer.

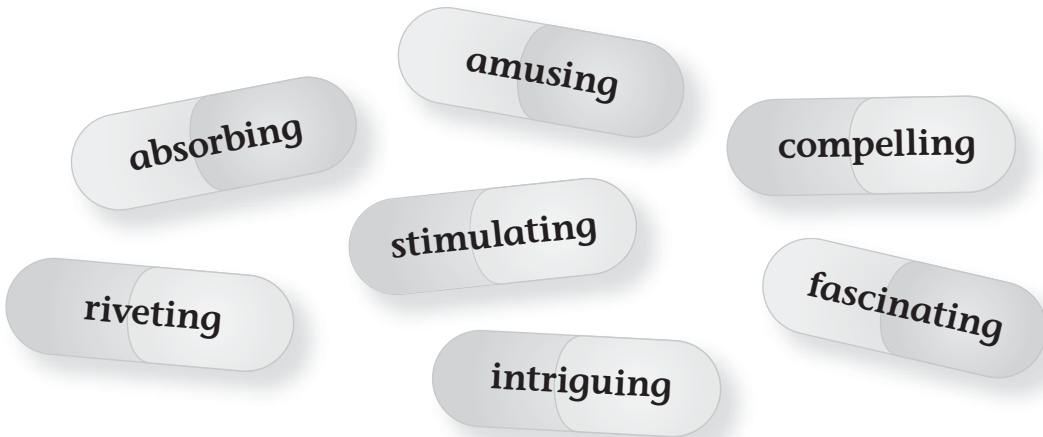
<b>essential</b>	The approval is necessary to the actual continuance of the project, and without it, the project will not move forward.
<b>imperative</b>	In addition to being absolutely necessary or required, the community's input is unavoidable.
<b>influential</b>	The community's input will influence the developer's plans.
<b>meaningful</b>	This gives the impression that the developer cares about the wishes of the community.
<b>paramount</b>	The community's approval could have a chief impact on the developer's plans.
<b>relevant</b>	The community's input should have significant and demonstrable bearing on the issues.
<b>significant</b>	The community's approval matters, but there's no indication the approval—or not—will have any bearing on the developer's plan.

**CURED!**

*The most **influential** of all educational factors is the conversation in a child's home.*

WILLIAM TEMPLE

# interesting

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *arousing the curiosity or engaging the attention*

## cures for the common word

**absorbing**

affecting  
alluring  
**amusing**  
arresting  
captivating  
charismatic  
**compelling**  
curious  
delightful  
elegant  
enchanted  
engaging

engrossing  
entertaining  
enthraling  
entrancing  
exceptional  
exotic  
**fascinating**  
gracious  
gripping  
impressive  
inspiring  
**intriguing**  
inviting

magnetic  
pleasing  
pleasurable  
provocative  
refreshing  
**riveting**  
**stimulating**  
stirring  
striking  
suspicious  
thought-provoking  
unusual  
winning

## CURED!

*I enjoyed the courtroom as a stage—but not so **amusing** as Broadway.*

MAE WEST

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

My mom and I saw a very **interesting** play.

It is hard to know exactly what this means—if the play was good, bad, or something else entirely.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *interesting*:

My mom and I saw a very \_\_\_\_\_ play.

<b>absorbing</b>	The play was engaging and engrossing and occupied our full attention or interest.
<b>amusing</b>	The play was entertaining in a light, playful, or pleasant manner and caused us to laugh.
<b>compelling</b>	The play irresistibly kept our attention and urged, almost forced, us to think about its message.
<b>fascinating</b>	The play was irresistibly charming and captivating and caused us to see a point with a different perspective.
<b>intriguing</b>	The play aroused our interest—and our curiosity.
<b>riveting</b>	The play held our attention and kept us engrossed in the action, dialogue, or message.
<b>stimulating</b>	The play was exciting and invigorating.

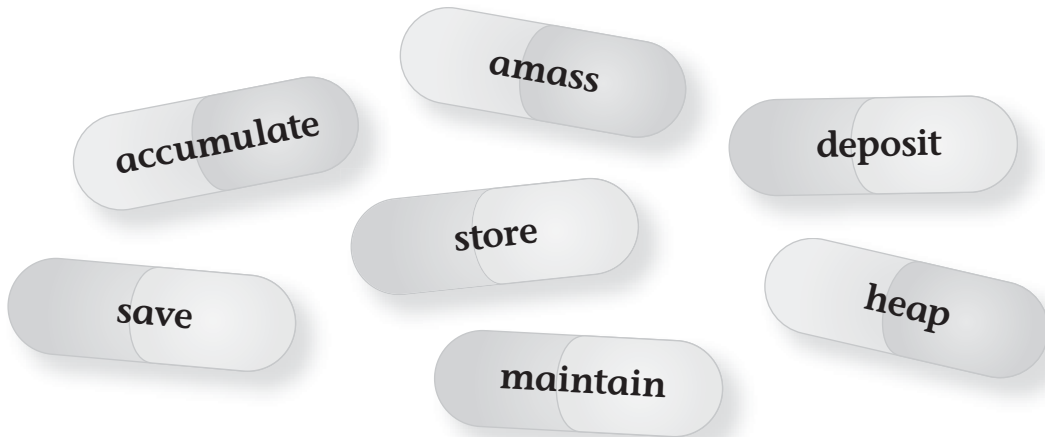
**CURED!**

Good communication is as **stimulating** as black coffee, and just as hard to sleep after.

ANNE MORROW LINDBERGH

# keep

PART OF SPEECH *verb*  
 DEFINITION *to hold or retain in one's possession*



## *cures for the common word*

**accumulate****amass**

cache

care for

carry

conduct

conserve

control

**deposit**

detain

direct

enjoy

garner

grasp

grip

have

**heap**

hold back

**maintain**

manage

own

pile

place

possess

preserve

put up

reserve

retain

**save**

stack

stock

**store**

withhold

## CURED!

*We **accumulate** our opinions at an age when our understanding is at its weakest.*

G. C. (GEORG CHRISTOPH) LICHTENBERG

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

There's room for Chris to **keep** his entire antique ski collection in the new garage.

In this sentence, *keep* doesn't tell us precisely what Chris is doing with the collection and what the main advantage is of the new garage.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *keep*:

There's room for Chris to \_\_\_\_\_ his entire antique ski collection in the new garage.

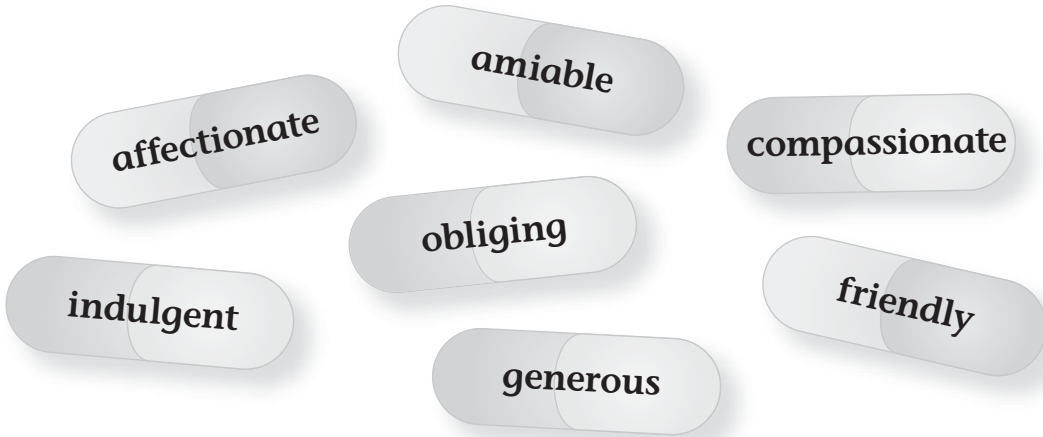
<b>accumulate</b>	Chris will be able to collect his skis in gradual degrees.
<b>amass</b>	Chris will have plenty of room to collect a large quantity of his skis.
<b>deposit</b>	Choosing <i>deposit</i> implies that it's not Chris's garage, but that someone is letting Chris leave his collection there.
<b>heap</b>	Chris is going to pile up his collection in the garage.
<b>maintain</b>	The new garage gives Chris a place to work on and keep his collection in good condition.
<b>save</b>	Chris's collection will now be safe in the new garage.
<b>store</b>	Chris may not get to enjoy his collection all the time, but now he can place it in the new garage for future use.

**CURED!**

*It is possible to **store** the mind with a million facts and still be entirely uneducated.*

ALEC BOURNE

# kind

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *of a good or benevolent nature or disposition*

## cures for the common word

**affectionate**all heart  
altruistic**amiable**amicable  
beneficent  
benevolent  
bigbounteous  
charitable

clement

**compassionate**

congenial

considerate

cordial  
courteous**friendly**generous  
gentle  
good-hearted  
gracious  
humane  
humanitarian**indulgent**kindhearted  
kindly

lenient

loving  
mild

neighborly

**obliging**philanthropic  
propitious  
softhearted  
sympathetic  
tenderhearted  
thoughtful  
tolerant  
understanding

## CURED!

*Always when I see a man fond of praise I always think it is because he is an **affectionate** man craving for affection.*

J. B. YEATS



DIAGNOSIS *limiting*Everyone likes the **kind** nanny.

There are many facets of being *kind*, and the following alternatives tell us more about the different ways in which she might be a great nanny.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *kind*:

Everyone likes the \_\_\_\_\_ nanny.

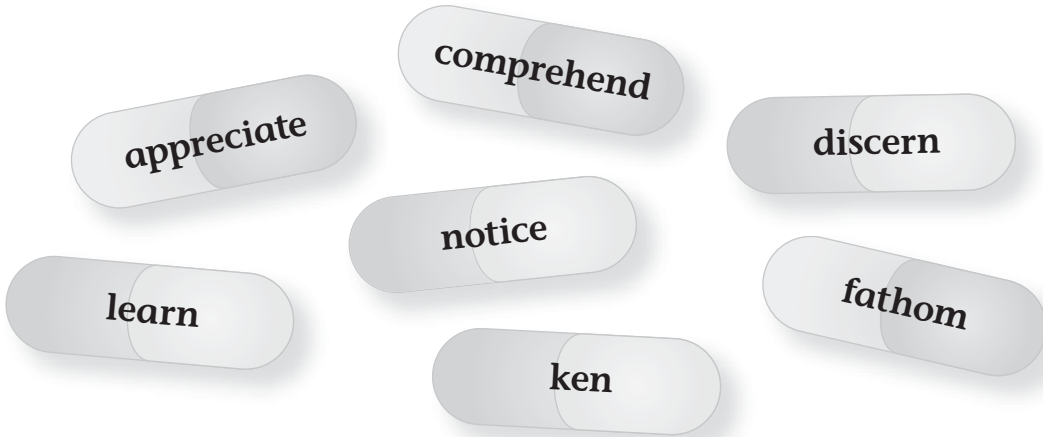
<b>affectionate</b>	She shows love and affection and is fondly tender.
<b>amiable</b>	She is very agreeable and willing to accept the wishes, decisions, or suggestions of others.
<b>compassionate</b>	She is sympathetic and feels and shows compassion.
<b>friendly</b>	She is kind and pleasant, not antagonistic or hostile.
<b>generous</b>	She is unselfish and liberal in giving and sharing—of her time, creativity, and attention.
<b>indulgent</b>	She's lenient and permissive; <i>indulgent</i> carries a somewhat negative connotation of her giving in too much.
<b>obliging</b>	She is often willing or eager to do favors for people and is very accommodating.

**CURED!**

Conrad Hilton was very **generous** to me in the divorce settlement. He gave me 5,000 Gideon Bibles.

ZSA ZSA GABOR

# know

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to perceive or understand as fact or truth; to apprehend clearly and with certainty*

## cures for the common word

apperceive  
**appreciate**  
 apprehend  
 be acquainted  
 be cognizant  
 be informed  
 be read  
 be versed  
 cognize

**comprehend**  
 differentiate  
**discern**  
 discriminate  
 distinguish  
 experience  
**fathom**  
 feel certain  
 grasp

have  
**ken**  
**learn**  
**notice**  
 perceive  
 realize  
 recognize  
 see  
 understand

## CURED!

*The movies are so rarely great art, that if we can't **appreciate** great trash, there is little reason for us to go.*

PAULINE KAEI

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

It took me a while to **know** the local customs.

Being familiar with local customs can be very helpful, but this sentence doesn't clearly indicate whether I understand or accept the customs.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *know*:

It took me a while to \_\_\_\_\_ the local customs.

<b>appreciate</b>	I became fully aware of the customs and was able to acknowledge that they are true for the area.
<b>comprehend</b>	Even though some of the customs were unfamiliar to me, I grasped their nature and meaning.
<b>discern</b>	By observing, I became able to recognize certain actions as local customs—as opposed to unfamiliar individual behavior.
<b>fathom</b>	I was finally able to comprehend and perceive the truth of the customs.
<b>ken</b>	I was already acquainted with some of the customs, because someone had told me about some of them, and now I understand them even more.
<b>learn</b>	I came to know about the customs from my own study and experience.
<b>notice</b>	It took me a while even to become aware of the local customs.

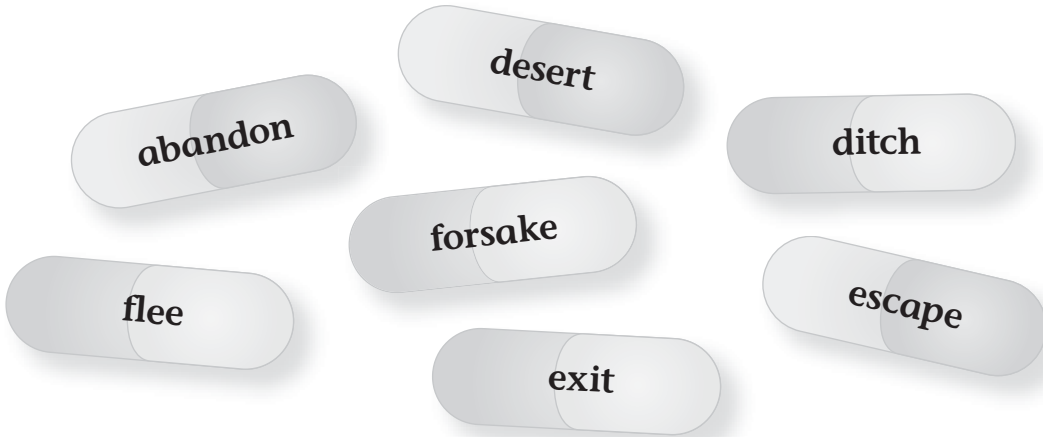
**CURED!**

**Learn** from the mistakes of others—you can never live long enough to make them all yourself.

JOHN LUTHER

# leave

PART OF SPEECH *verb*  
 DEFINITION *to depart from permanently; to quit*



## *cures for the common word*

**abandon**  
 abscond  
 break away  
 cast off  
 clear out  
 cut out  
 decamp  
 defect  
**desert**  
 disappear  
**ditch**  
 embark  
 emigrate  
**escape**  
**exit**

**flee**  
 flit  
 fly  
**forsake**  
 go away  
 go forth  
 head out  
 migrate  
 move out  
 part  
 pull out  
 push off  
 quit  
 relinquish  
 retire

ride off  
 run along  
 sally  
 scam  
 set out  
 slip out  
 split  
 step down  
 take leave  
 take off  
 vacate  
 vamoose  
 vanish  
 walk out  
 withdraw

## CURED!

*A poem is never finished, only **abandoned**.*

PAUL VALERY

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Darrel had to **leave** his car at the side of the road.

No doubt there was something wrong for Darrel to have to leave his car, but *leave* in this sentence doesn't give an indication of just why, and the following alternatives tell a bit more of the story.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *leave*:

Darrel had to \_\_\_\_\_ his car at the side of the road.

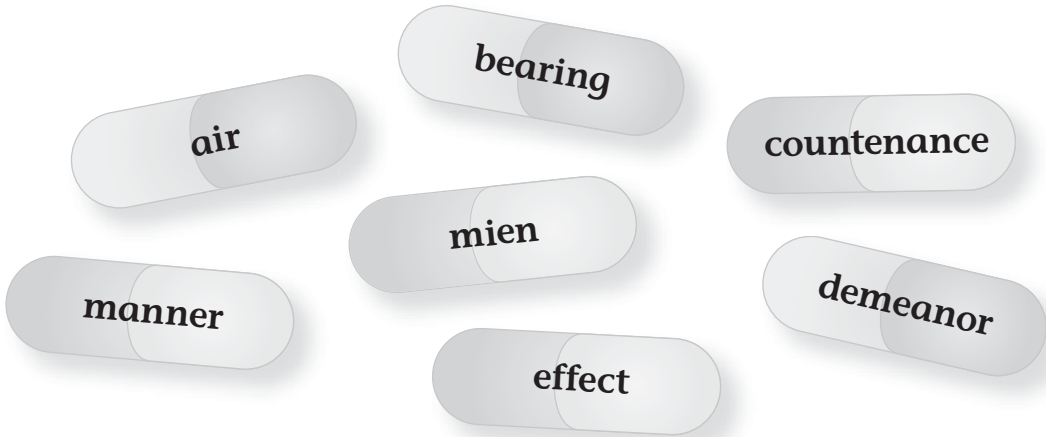
<b>abandon</b>	Darrel needed to leave and completely give up on the car, which was perhaps broken beyond repair.
<b>desert</b>	Darrel left the car without intending to return; the implication is that he left contrary to a promise or commitment not to.
<b>ditch</b>	This is an informal way to say that Darrel had to get rid of the car for some reason.
<b>escape</b>	Darrel got away from the car—after being confined or restrained in it for some reason—perhaps because of some impending danger.
<b>exit</b>	Darrel gave up possession of the car; the implication is that he was able to walk away calmly as opposed to hurrying away.
<b>flee</b>	Darrel quickly ran away from the car, but we still don't know why.
<b>forsake</b>	Darrel adored that classic car, but for some reason he sadly had to give it up.

**CURED!**

*Nobody grows old merely by living a number of years. We grow old by **deserting** our ideals. Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul.*

SAMUEL ULLMAN

# look

PART OF SPEECH *noun*DEFINITION *the way in which a person or thing appears to the eye or to the mind*

## *cures for the common word*

**air**aspect  
attitude**bearing**cast  
character  
complexion**countenance****demeanor****effect**expression  
face  
fashion  
feature  
form  
guise  
image**manner****mien**mug  
physiognomy  
posture  
presence  
seeming  
semblance  
shape  
visage

## CURED!

A man's own **manner** and character is what most becomes him.

MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

The woman in the park had a sad **look** about her.

In this sentence, it's unclear exactly what gave us the sense that the woman was sad, and the alternatives give us a clearer explanation of how she is demonstrating her sadness.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *look*:

The woman in the park had a sad \_\_\_\_\_ about her.

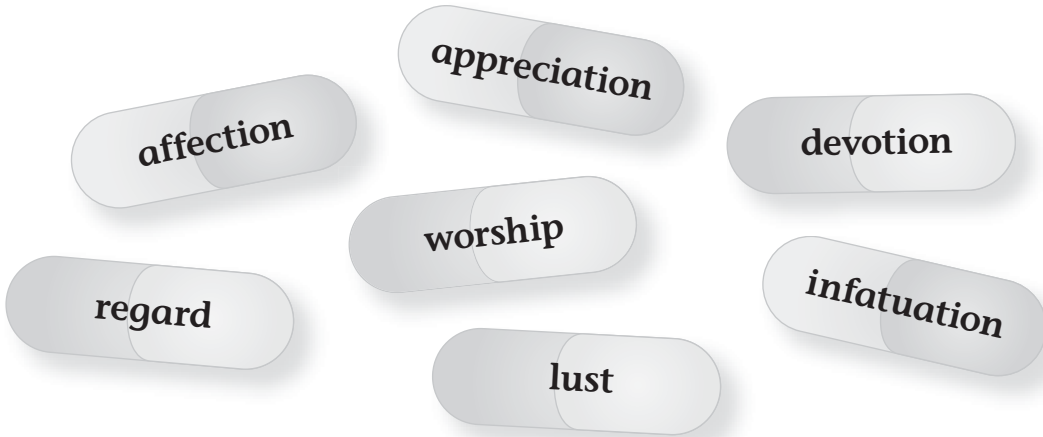
<b>air</b>	It was her appearance or manner that gave the impression of being sad.
<b>bearing</b>	Her posture and the way she conducted herself, maybe even her gestures, made her appear sad.
<b>countenance</b>	The look or expression on her face was sad.
<b>demeanor</b>	Her conduct and behavior—perhaps crying—told us she was sad.
<b>effect</b>	By her look or manner, she was causing those around her to be sad.
<b>manner</b>	The way she was speaking with and treating others told us of her sadness.
<b>mien</b>	Some aspect of her manner revealed her inner state of sadness.

**CURED!**

*Excess on occasion is exhilarating. It prevents moderation from acquiring the deadening **effect** of a habit.*

W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

# love

PART OF SPEECH *noun*DEFINITION *a profoundly tender, passionate affection for another person or an object*

## cures for the common word

adulation

**affection**

allegiance

amity

amour

**appreciation**

ardor

attachment

crush

delight

**devotion**

emotion

enchantment

enjoyment

fervor

fidelity

fondness

friendship

hankering

idolatry

inclination

**infatuation**

involvement

liking

**lust**

partiality

passion

rapture

**regard**

relish

respect

sentiment

soft spot

taste

tenderness

weakness

**worship**

yearning

zeal

## CURED!

*After a semester or so, my **infatuation** with computers burnt out as quickly as it had begun.*

ERIC ALLIN CORNELL



DIAGNOSIS *confusing*

Taylor realized that her feelings for Thorne were actually **love**.

Love can have a broad spectrum of meanings, and in this sentence, *love* doesn't give us much clarity on the level of Taylor's feelings.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *love*:

Taylor realized that her feelings for Thorne were actually \_\_\_\_\_.

<b>affection</b>	Taylor had a tender fondness for Thorne, but it wasn't really true love.
<b>appreciation</b>	Taylor felt great gratitude to Thorne, but not necessarily an affection for him.
<b>devotion</b>	Taylor was thankful to Thorne to a degree that caused an earnest attachment to him.
<b>infatuation</b>	Taylor had a foolish, all-absorbing passion for Thorne, which probably won't last.
<b>lust</b>	Taylor realized she really only had an intense sexual desire for Thorne.
<b>regard</b>	Taylor had great respect for Thorne and held him in high esteem.
<b>worship</b>	Taylor had an adoring reverence for Thorne.

**CURED!**

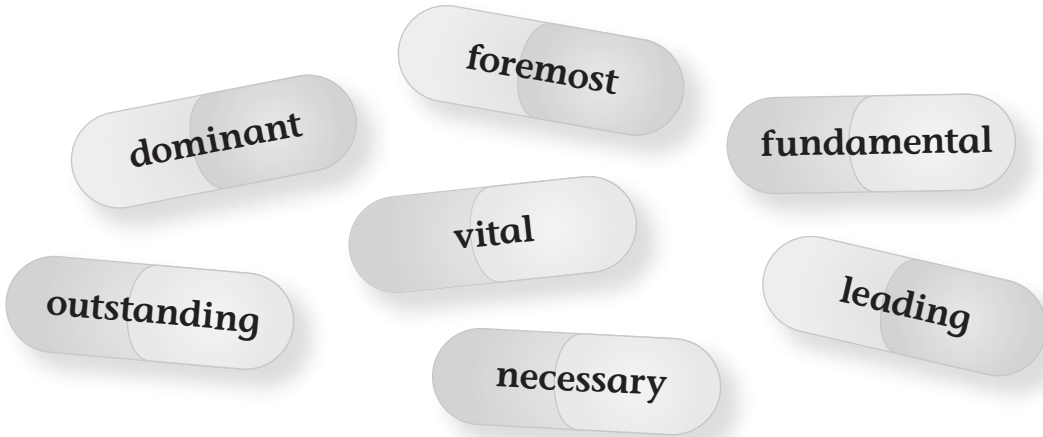
Perpetual **devotion** to what a man calls his business, is only to be sustained by perpetual neglect of many other things.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

# main

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *chief in size, extent, or importance; principal; leading*



## *cures for the common word*

capital  
cardinal  
central  
chief  
controlling  
critical  
crucial  
**dominant**  
essential  
first

**foremost**  
**fundamental**  
head  
**leading**  
major  
**necessary**  
**outstanding**  
paramount  
particular  
predominant

preeminent  
premier  
prevailing  
primary  
prime  
special  
star  
stellar  
supreme  
**vital**

## CURED!

*Start by doing what is **necessary**, then do what is possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible.*

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

The article's **main** point concerned increased global warming.

We know that *main* implies importance of some kind, but we're not sure in what way or on what the importance is based.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *main*:

The article's \_\_\_\_\_ point concerned increased global warming.

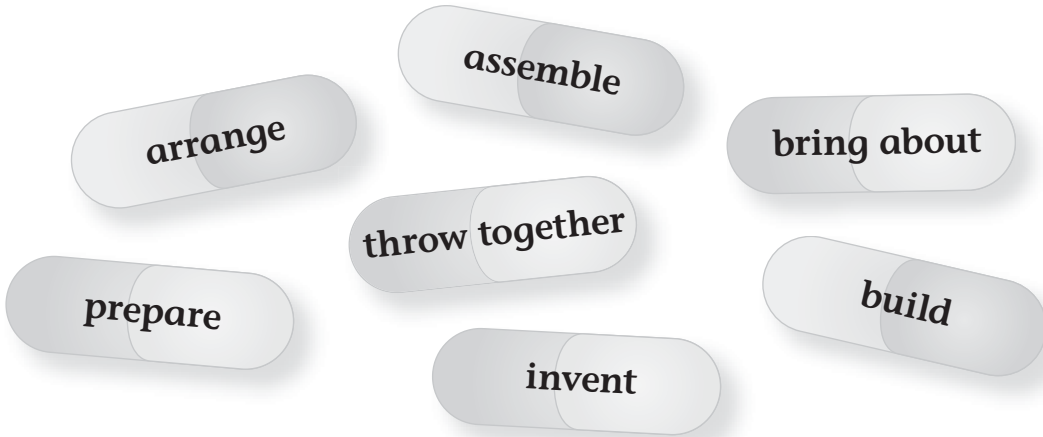
<b>dominant</b>	There were many points in the article, and increased global warming is the one that most influenced the information or perspective of the article.
<b>foremost</b>	Increased global warming was the article's most important point, ahead of all others.
<b>fundamental</b>	Increased global warming was the primary point upon which the rest of the article was based.
<b>leading</b>	Increased global warming was the first point of the article.
<b>necessary</b>	The point of increased global warming was essential and requisite to the entire article.
<b>outstanding</b>	The point of increased global warming was most prominent and striking; it stood out.
<b>vital</b>	Getting across the truth of increased global warming was of critical importance.

**CURED!**

*Love and freedom are **vital** to the creation and upbringing of a child.*

SYLVIA PANKHURST

# make

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to cause to exist or happen; to bring about; to create*

## cures for the common word

accomplish  
adjust  
**arrange**  
**assemble**  
beget  
brew  
**bring about**  
**build**  
cause  
compile  
compose  
conceive  
constitute  
construct  
cook up

dream up  
effect  
engender  
fabricate  
fashion  
father  
forge  
form  
frame  
generate  
hatch  
initiate  
**invent**  
knock out  
manufacture

mold  
occasion  
originate  
parent  
**prepare**  
procreate  
produce  
put together  
secure  
shape  
sire  
spawn  
synthesize  
**throw together**  
whip up

## CURED!

*The first qualification for a historian is to have no ability to **invent**.*

STENDHAL [MARIE-HENRI BEYLE]

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Jason is working to **make** a state-of-the-art veterinary clinic.

This is certainly a noble cause, but *make* doesn't clearly tell us what Jason's role will be in bringing the clinic into existence.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *make*:

Jason is working to \_\_\_\_\_ a state-of-the-art veterinary clinic.

<b>arrange</b>	Jason is bringing about an agreement to create the clinic, but we don't know if he will be involved with putting together the clinic.
<b>assemble</b>	Jason is going to bring together all the components needed for the entire clinic.
<b>bring about</b>	This is an informal way to say that Jason will do everything necessary to accomplish the goal of bringing the clinic into existence.
<b>build</b>	This could mean that Jason will actually help to construct the building, but it may mean that he will be instrumental in assembling all the parts needed to establish the clinic.
<b>invent</b>	This implies there has never been such a clinic and Jason is creating it based on his own ingenuity—and maybe some experimentation.
<b>prepare</b>	This implies a clinic is in existence and Jason is going to be sure it is duly state-of-the-art equipped in proper condition and readiness.
<b>throw together</b>	Jason is putting together the clinic in a hurried way, and although this can have a connotation of being haphazard, in today's world it can imply admiration for doing something so big so quickly.

**CURED!**

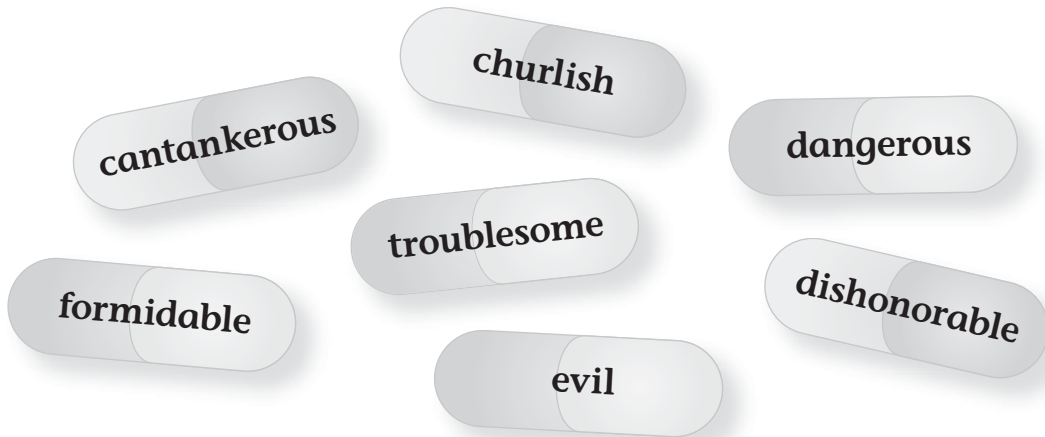
*It takes twenty years to **build** a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you'll do things differently.*

WARREN BUFFET

# mean

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *hostile, offensive, selfish, or unaccommodating; nasty; malicious*



## cures for the common word

bad-tempered  
bitchy  
callous  
**cantankerous**  
**churlish**  
contemptible  
**dangerous**  
despicable  
difficult  
dirty  
disagreeable  
**dishonorable**  
**evil**  
**formidable**  
hard

hard-nosed  
ignoble  
ill-tempered  
infamous  
knavish  
liverish  
lousy  
malicious  
malign  
nasty  
perfidious  
pesky  
rotten  
rough  
rude

rugged  
scurrilous  
shameless  
sinking  
snide  
sour  
the lowest  
treacherous  
**troublesome**  
ugly  
unfriendly  
unpleasant  
unscrupulous  
vexatious  
vicious

## CURED!

*May the forces of **evil** become confused on the way to your house.*

GEORGE CARLIN

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

The wicked stepmother in *Cinderella* was downright **mean**.

Well, she sure was, but *mean* is too limiting when there are so many other words to use that describe the horrid ways she showed that meanness.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *mean*:

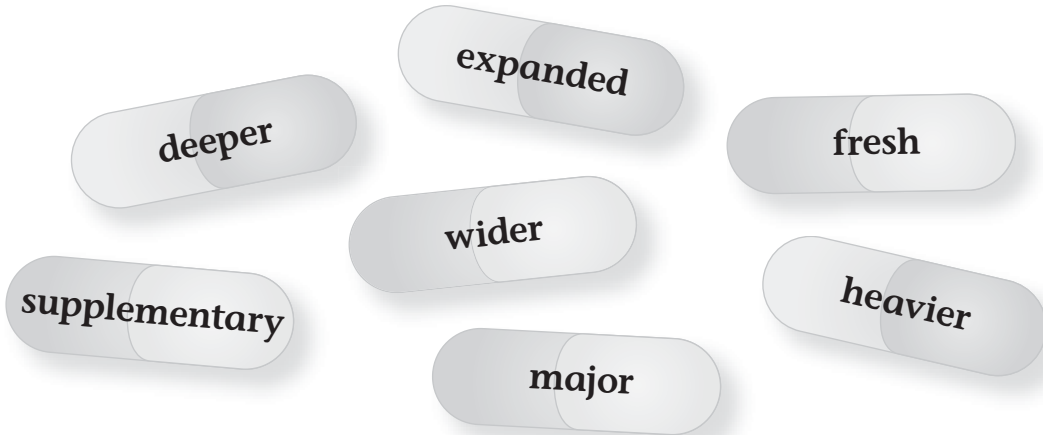
The wicked stepmother in *Cinderella* was downright \_\_\_\_\_.

<b>cantankerous</b>	She was constantly disagreeable and argumentative.
<b>churlish</b>	She was rude, crude, ill-mannered, coarse, and contemptible in behavior and appearance.
<b>dangerous</b>	She caused Cinderella great physical and emotional injury, to say the least.
<b>dishonorable</b>	She was clearly unprincipled and disreputable.
<b>evil</b>	Her entire personality was characterized by anger and spite.
<b>formidable</b>	For years she managed to cause fear and apprehension—in everyone.
<b>troublesome</b>	She caused trouble for everyone and was constantly annoying.

**CURED!**

*Life is pleasant. Death is peaceful. It's the transition that's **troublesome**.*

ISAAC ASIMOV

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *additional or further; in greater quantity, amount, measure, degree, or number*

## *cures for the common word*

added  
additional  
amassed  
another  
augmented  
bounteous  
**deeper**  
enhanced  
exceeding  
expanded

extended  
extra  
farther  
**fresh**  
further  
greater  
**heavier**  
higher  
increased  
innumerable

larger  
likewise  
**major**  
massed  
new  
numerous  
other  
replenishment  
**supplementary**  
**wider**

## CURED!

*One should never criticize his own work except in a **fresh** and hopeful mood.  
The self-criticism of a tired mind is suicide.*

CHARLES HORTEN COOLEY



DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

I need to conduct **more** research for my report.

In this sentence, *more* is clear in indicating additional research but doesn't tell us much about what kind of research.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *more*:

I need to conduct \_\_\_\_\_ research for my report.

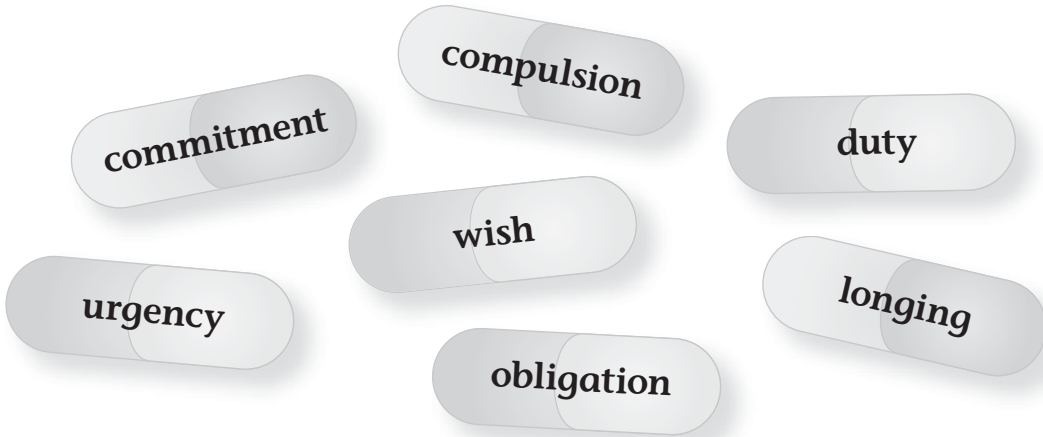
<b>deeper</b>	I need to continue my research extending far down from the surface meaning of my topic.
<b>expanded</b>	I need to look beyond the current scope of my research to increase the length and detail of my report.
<b>fresh</b>	I need to look at my topic in a novel and different way than I have so far.
<b>heavier</b>	I've been a little light on my research and need to do much more than before.
<b>major</b>	I haven't done any research so far, and I have a lot to do!
<b>supplementary</b>	I need to add something to my research to make it complete—perhaps to make up for a deficiency or to extend or strengthen the whole report.
<b>wider</b>	I need to look at a much greater variety of subjects or cases to give me more thorough information.

**CURED!**

*The responsibility of tolerance lies in those who have the **wider** vision.*

GEORGE ELIOT

# need

PART OF SPEECH *noun*DEFINITION *urgent want, as of something required or wanted*

## *cures for the common word*

ache  
charge  
**commitment**  
committal  
**compulsion**  
craving  
demand  
desire  
devoir

**duty**  
exigency  
extremity  
hunger  
itch  
**longing**  
must  
**obligation**  
occasion

requirement  
requisite  
right  
thirst  
urge  
**urgency**  
use  
weakness  
**wish**

## CURED!

*I write of the **wish** that comes true—for some reason, a terrifying concept.*

JAMES M. CAIN

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Parents may feel a **need** to protect even their adult children.

In this sentence, *need* doesn't give us a clear indication as to whether the desire to protect is appropriate or not.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *need*:

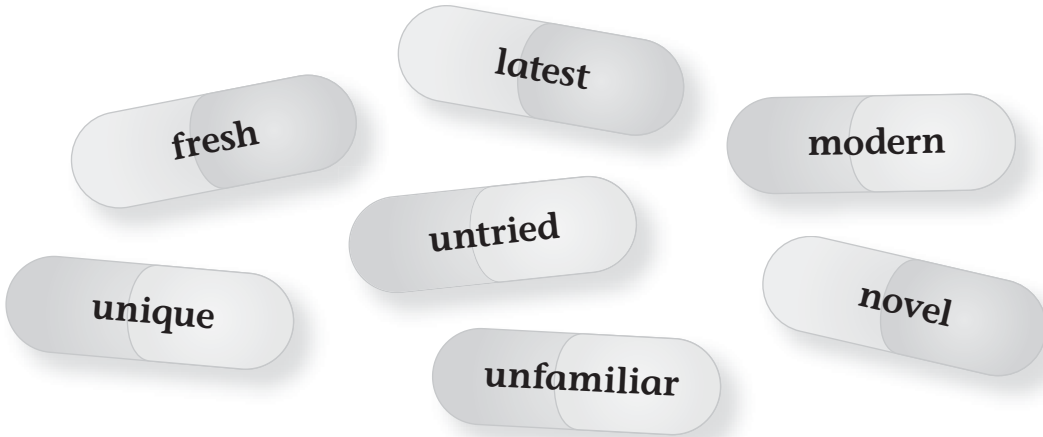
Parents may feel a \_\_\_\_\_ to protect even their adult children.

<b>commitment</b>	Parents may feel bound emotionally to protect their children with a sincere and steadfast pledge, which tends to give us a positive sense.
<b>compulsion</b>	Some parents have an irresistible impulse to protect their children, regardless of the rationality of the motivation; <i>compulsion</i> tells us that the feeling is probably not appropriate.
<b>duty</b>	Parents may feel they are doing what they are required to do by moral or legal obligation.
<b>longing</b>	Some parents have a strong, persistent desire or craving to protect their adult children.
<b>obligation</b>	Parents may feel bound by duty, custom, or law to protect their children; the connotation is that perhaps they are doing so because they <i>have to</i> rather than because they <i>want to</i> .
<b>urgency</b>	There may be an earnest and pressing importance for the parents to protect their children; the implication is that there is real danger.
<b>wish</b>	Parents often have a continuing want and desire to protect their children.

**CURED!**

The **duty** of youth is to challenge corruption.

KURT COBAIN

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *of recent origin, production, purchase, etc.*

## *cures for the common word*

dewy  
different  
dissimilar  
distinct  
edgy  
fashionable  
**fresh**  
inexperienced  
just out  
**latest**  
**modern**  
modernistic  
modish

neoteric  
newfangled  
**novel**  
now  
original  
recent  
strange  
topical  
ultramodern  
uncontaminated  
**unfamiliar**  
**unique**  
unknown

unlike  
unseasoned  
unskilled  
unspoiled  
untouched  
untrained  
**untried**  
untrodden  
unused  
unusual  
up-to-date  
virgin  
youthful

## *CURED!*

*I think **modern** science should graft functional wings on a pig, simply so no one can ever use that stupid saying again.*

ANONYMOUS

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

The detergent manufacturer introduced a **new** formula.

In this example, *new* could have a host of different meanings—both positive and negative.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *new*:

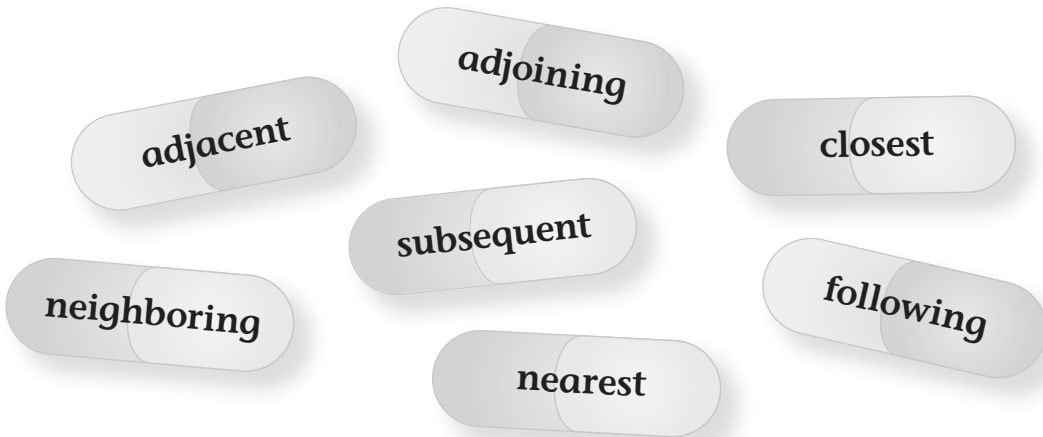
The detergent manufacturer introduced a \_\_\_\_\_ formula.

<b>fresh</b>	The formula is newly made or obtained.
<b>latest</b>	The formula may have been created at any time, and this is the most recent formula the manufacturer is introducing.
<b>modern</b>	The formula is characteristic or expressive of recent times.
<b>novel</b>	The formula is of a new kind, different from anything seen or known before.
<b>unfamiliar</b>	The formula may have been around for some time but is not known or well known.
<b>unique</b>	This could have two slightly different meanings: the formula is the only one of its kind, or it is not the typical formula.
<b>untried</b>	The formula possibly has not ever been tried or at least has not been adequately tested or proved.

**CURED!**

Create your own visual style . . . let it be **unique** for yourself and yet identifiable for others.

GEORGE ORSON WELLES

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *immediately following in time, order, importance, etc.*

## *cures for the common word*

abutting  
**adjacent**  
**adjoining**  
 after  
 alongside  
 attached  
 beside  
 bordering  
 close

**closest**  
 coming  
 connecting  
 consecutive  
 consequent  
 contiguous  
 ensuing  
**following**  
 immediate

later  
 nearby  
**nearest**  
**neighboring**  
 proximate  
**subsequent**  
 succeeding  
 thereafter  
 touching

## *CURED!*

*Arrogance and snobbism live in **adjoining** rooms and use a common currency.*

MORLEY SAFER

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

Rosie's best friend lives in Brewster, the **next** town on Highway 1.

Choosing *next* here actually gives us sufficient information, but the following alternatives broaden our understanding of where Brewster is in relation to where Rosie lives.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *next*:

Rosie's best friend lives in Brewster, the \_\_\_\_\_ town on Highway 1.

<b>adjacent</b>	Brewster is close to Rosie's town, but <i>adjacent</i> doesn't give us an indication of in which direction or if it's a bordering town or simply nearby.
<b>adjoining</b>	Brewster is bordering the town where Rosie lives, in direct contact at some point.
<b>closest</b>	There are several towns nearby, but Brewster is most near to Rosie's town.
<b>following</b>	Continuing on Highway 1, Brewster is a town we'll come to—though it doesn't tell us how close or in which direction.
<b>nearest</b>	Brewster is within the shortest distance or interval of time from Rosie's house.
<b>neighboring</b>	Since we're talking of towns, this is an ideal word for a nearby or adjacent town.
<b>subsequent</b>	On Highway 1, Brewster is the town that comes after Rosie's town—again, though, it doesn't tell us in which direction or how far it is.

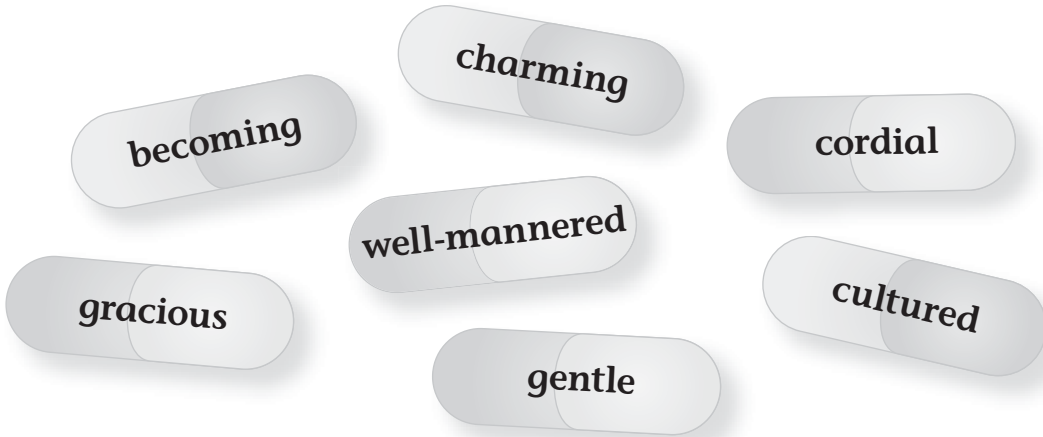
**CURED!**

*At a formal dinner party, the person nearest death should always be seated closest to the bathroom.*

GEORGE CARLIN

# nice

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*  
 DEFINITION *pleasing and agreeable in nature*



## cures for the common word

admirable  
 agreeable  
 amiable  
 approved  
 attractive  
**becoming**  
**charming**  
 commendable  
 considerate  
 copacetic  
**cordial**  
 courteous  
**cultured**  
 decorous

delightful  
 favorable  
 friendly  
 genial  
**gentle**  
 good  
**gracious**  
 helpful  
 hunky-dory  
 ingratiating  
 inviting  
 kind  
 kindly  
 lovely

nifty  
 obliging  
 OK  
 peachy  
 pleasant  
 pleasurable  
 polite  
 seemingly  
 swell  
 unpretentious  
 welcome  
**well-mannered**  
 winning  
 winsome

## CURED!

Being **cultured** is the least expensive form of respectability.

MASON COOLEY



DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Rich has a **nice** personality.

We know that this means something positive (unless being used facetiously), but we'd like to know more precisely what is pleasant about Rich.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *nice*:

Rich has a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ personality.

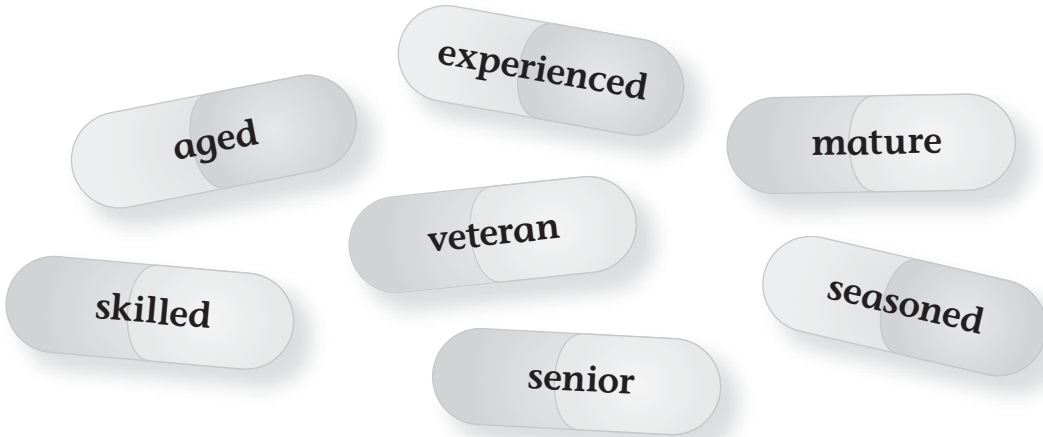
<b>becoming</b>	Rich's personality is pleasing and appropriate, and he presents himself in the best light.
<b>charming</b>	Rich is a delight and can induce an action using his strong attractiveness or personal skills.
<b>cordial</b>	Rich is warm, sincere, and friendly.
<b>cultured</b>	Rich is refined in his manner and enlightened and knowledgeable in the arts.
<b>gentle</b>	Rich is never severe or harsh in any way.
<b>gracious</b>	Rich is kind and courteous and has a compassionate nature.
<b>well-mannered</b>	Rich is polite and courteous and is considered to be socially "correct" in his behavior.

**CURED!**

*I'm a **charming** coward; I fight with words.*

CARL REINER

## old

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *having lived or existed for a relatively long time; far advanced in years or life**cures for the common word***aged**

ancient  
broken down  
debilitated  
decrepit  
deficient  
doddering  
elderly  
enfeebled  
exhausted  
**experienced**  
fossil

**geriatric**

getting on  
gray-haired  
grizzled  
hoary  
impaired  
inactive  
infirm  
**mature**  
matured  
olden  
patriarchal

**seasoned**

senile  
**senior**  
**skilled**  
superannuated  
tired  
used  
venerable  
versed  
**veteran**  
wasted  
worn

**CURED!**

*Imagination grows by exercise, and contrary to common belief, is more powerful in the **mature** than in the young.*

W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Jim is an **old** member of the cast.

When *old* is used in this context, it would probably be kinder to look for an alternative—one that has a more diplomatic and more precise connotation.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *old*:

Jim is a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ member of the cast.

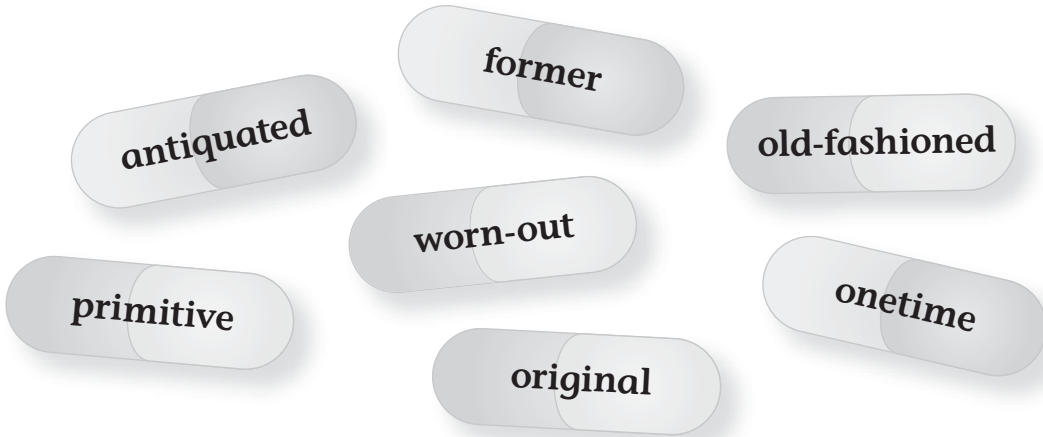
<b>aged</b>	We don't know how long Jim has been with the cast, but he is advanced in age.
<b>experienced</b>	Whether it's with this cast or just in the industry, Jim has gained a level of skill or knowledge based on his past experience.
<b>mature</b>	Jim—or at least his skills—are fully developed in body or mind.
<b>seasoned</b>	Jim is competent because of his trial and experience.
<b>senior</b>	Though this could relate to Jim's chronological age, it would more often imply he is of higher or the highest rank or standing in the cast.
<b>skilled</b>	Jim's skill is either from experience or from training.
<b>veteran</b>	Jim has long service with the cast.

**CURED!**

*I was very, very naive for a **veteran** guy. I thought I was going to be a place where dissent could be heard.*

PHIL DONAHUE

PART OF SPEECH	<i>adjective</i>
DEFINITION	<i>obsolete; no longer in general use</i>



## *cures for the common word*

aboriginal  
age-old  
antediluvian  
**antiquated**  
antique  
archaic  
bygone  
cast-off  
crumbling  
dated  
decayed  
démodé  
early  
erstwhile  
**former**

hackneyed  
immemorial  
late  
moth-eaten  
of yore  
olden  
oldfangled  
**old-fashioned**  
old-time  
**onetime**  
**original**  
outdated  
outmoded  
passé  
past

previous  
primeval  
**primitive**  
primordial  
quondam  
remote  
rusty  
stale  
superannuated  
time-worn  
traditional  
unfashionable  
unoriginal  
venerable  
**worn-out**

**CURED!**

An **original** writer is not one who imitates nobody, but one whom nobody can imitate.

FRANÇOIS-RENÉ DE CHATEAUBRIAND

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

The manuscript files are on my **old** computer.

For a second printing of my book, I need the original manuscript files, and we can't tell from the use of *old* in this sentence whether I'm going to be able to get those files or not.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *old*:

The manuscript files are on my \_\_\_\_\_ computer.

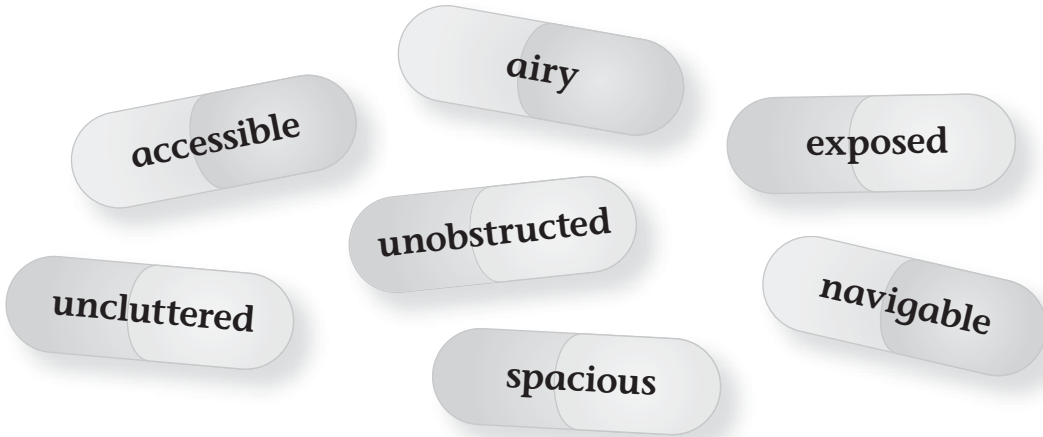
<b>antiquated</b>	The files are on a computer that is so obsolete I no longer use it.
<b>former</b>	I'm referring to the computer I used before my current one, and it doesn't necessarily mean there was or is anything wrong with it.
<b>old-fashioned</b>	The computer is out of style but still may work just fine.
<b>onetime</b>	The connotation is that the files are on the computer I used at one time and may no longer have access to.
<b>original</b>	The files are on my very first computer.
<b>primitive</b>	The computer is rather simple and unsophisticated and probably can't even perform the way I need it to today.
<b>worn-out</b>	My beloved computer is no longer working; it is so damaged by use that it's beyond repair.

**CURED!**

*Only two things are infinite, the universe and human stupidity, and I'm not sure about the **former**.*

ALBERT EINSTEIN

# open

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *not closed or barred; relatively free of obstructions*

## cures for the common word

accessible  
agape  
airy  
ajar  
bare  
clear  
cleared  
dehiscent  
disclosed  
emptied  
expansive  
**exposed**  
extended  
free

gaping  
naked  
**navigable**  
patent  
patulous  
peeled  
revealed  
rolling  
**spacious**  
spread out  
stripped  
susceptible  
unbarred  
unblocked

unbolted  
unburdened  
**uncluttered**  
uncovered  
unfolded  
unfurled  
unimpeded  
unlocked  
**unobstructed**  
unsealed  
unstopped  
vacated  
wide  
yawning

## CURED!

*We're an ideal political family, as **accessible** as Disneyland.*

MAUREEN REAGAN

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

We're creating an **open** path from the house to the garden.

Because *open* as an adjective has almost eighty definitions, many of which could apply in this sentence, we definitely need to narrow our meaning to have a clearer picture about the path to the garden.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *open*:

We're creating a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ path from the house to the garden.

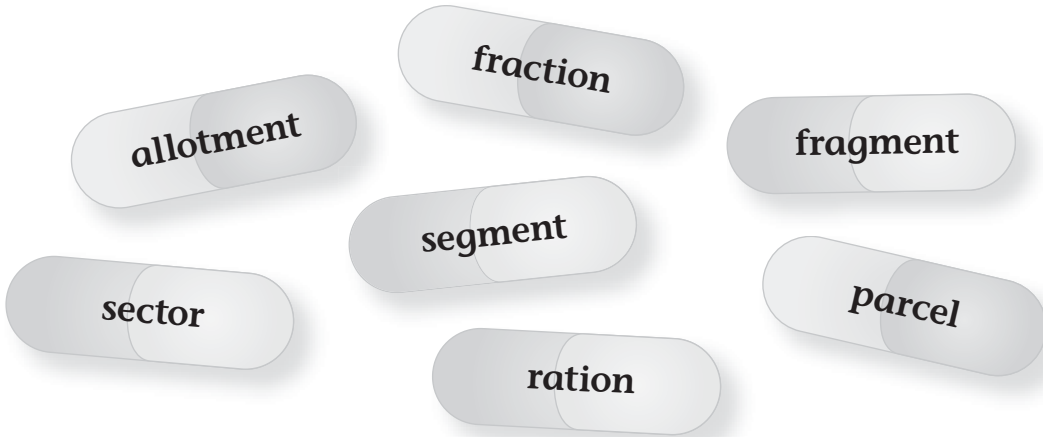
<b>accessible</b>	We'll now have a path that can be easily reached and used.
<b>airy</b>	The path may be covered, but it is open to a free current of fresh air.
<b>exposed</b>	The path won't be sheltered from the elements.
<b>navigable</b>	The path will now be wide enough to provide us easy passage to the garden.
<b>spacious</b>	Our path will have a great vast area.
<b>uncluttered</b>	The path now will be orderly and neat.
<b>unobstructed</b>	We're clearing any and all impediments or hindrances to create a clear path.

**CURED!**

*I would rather be **exposed** to the inconveniences attending too much liberty than to those attending too small a degree of it.*

THOMAS JEFFERSON

# part

PART OF SPEECH *noun*DEFINITION *a portion or division of a whole that is separate or distinct*

## cures for the common word

**allotment**  
 apportionment  
 articulation  
 bit  
 branch  
 chunk  
 component  
 constituent  
 department  
 detail  
 division  
 element  
 factor  
**fraction**  
**fragment**

helping  
 hunk  
 ingredient  
 installment  
 item  
 limb  
 lot  
 measure  
 member  
 module  
 moiety  
 molecule  
 organ  
**parcel**  
 particle

piece  
 portion  
 quantum  
**ration**  
 scrap  
 section  
**sector**  
**segment**  
 share  
 side  
 slice  
 sliver  
 splinter  
 subdivision  
 unit

## CURED!

*To me, photography is the simultaneous recognition, in a **fraction** of a second, of the significance of an event.*

HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON



DIAGNOSIS *vague*

A **part** of the population was evacuated early.

In this sentence, we aren't given enough information to know how many people were evacuated or if the early evacuation was a positive or negative situation.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *part*:

A(n) \_\_\_\_\_ of the population was evacuated early.

<b>allotment</b>	A predetermined number of people, or specific people, had been chosen for early evacuation should the need arise.
<b>fraction</b>	Only a minute number of people were evacuated early, and in this case, the implication is that the number was far too few.
<b>fragment</b>	Only a small, isolated group of people were evacuated early.
<b>parcel</b>	The people in a specific geographic portion of the city were evacuated early; <i>parcel</i> implies a relatively small geographic area.
<b>ration</b>	Only a set amount of people were set apart for early evacuation; the implication with <i>ration</i> is that it was a small number of people.
<b>sector</b>	A geographic section or zone of the population was evacuated early, though we have no indication how small or large that section was.
<b>segment</b>	Though <i>segment</i> could refer to a geographic location, the connotation is more that a certain group determined by some other factor (perhaps need or, unfortunately, economic status) was evacuated early.

**CURED!**

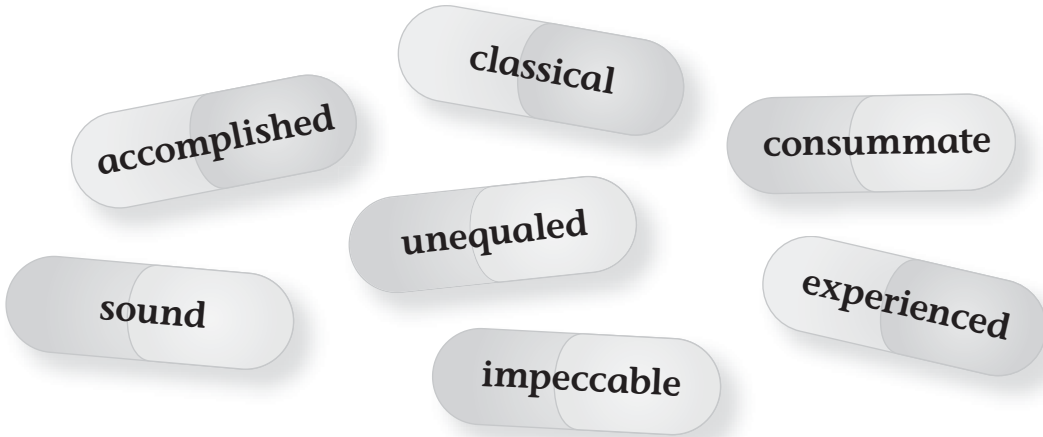
*It is unconscionable that we **ration** health care by the ability to pay. . . . Your heart breaks. Health care should be a given.*

KATHRYN ANASTOS

# perfect

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *entirely without any flaws, defects, or shortcomings*



## cures for the common word

absolute  
**accomplished**  
aces  
adept  
beyond compare  
blameless  
**classical**  
**consummate**  
crowning  
culminating  
defectless  
excellent  
excelling  
**experienced**  
expert

faultless  
finished  
flawless  
foolproof  
ideal  
immaculate  
**impeccable**  
indefectible  
masterful  
masterly  
matchless  
paradisiacal  
peerless  
pure  
skilled

skillful  
**sound**  
splendid  
spotless  
stainless  
sublime  
superb  
supreme  
ten  
unblemished  
**unequaled**  
unmarred  
untainted  
untarnished  
utopian

## CURED!

*The advantage of a **classical** education is that it enables you to despise the wealth which it prevents you from achieving.*

RUSSELL GREEN

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

Susan is a **perfect** first-chair violinist.

Susan is an ideal choice, but this doesn't give us much information as to what specifically makes her so right for the position.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *perfect*:

Susan is a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ first-chair violinist.

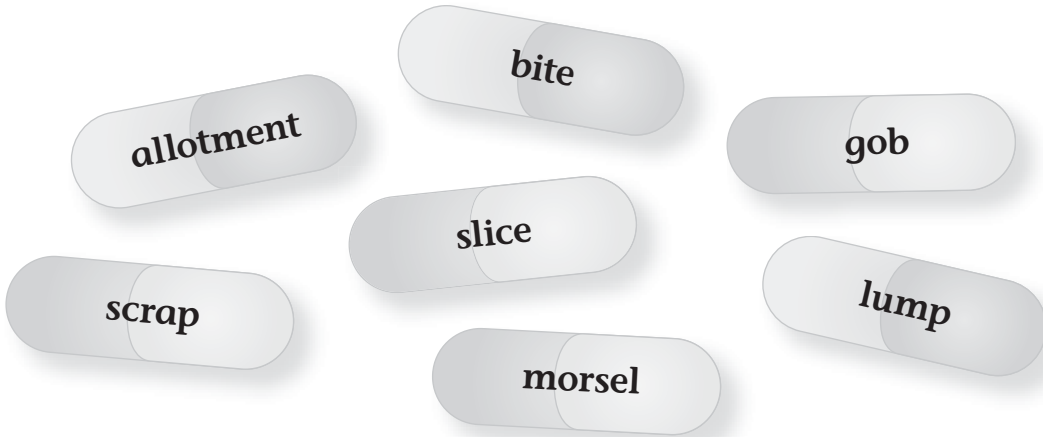
<b>accomplished</b>	Susan is highly skilled as a violinist; she is an expert.
<b>classical</b>	<i>Classical</i> in this sentence could have two meanings: Susan's talents are of the highest quality, or she plays more enduring types of music.
<b>consummate</b>	Susan can superbly perform a complete range of music.
<b>experienced</b>	Susan is certainly skillful through her experience, but this may refer instead to her experience at being first chair.
<b>impeccable</b>	Susan's playing is considered faultless.
<b>sound</b>	Susan is competent and reliable, which may be fine but doesn't indicate an advanced skill.
<b>unequaled</b>	Susan's talents as a violinist are matchless and cannot be surpassed.

**CURED!**

John Wayne was a **consummate** gentleman. Bigger than life.

JENNIFER O'NEILL

# piece

PART OF SPEECH *noun*DEFINITION *a separate or limited portion or quantity of something*

## cures for the common word

**allotment**

bit

**bite**

case

chomp

chunk

cut

division

example

fraction

fragment

**gob**

half

hunk

instance

interest

item

length

lot

**lump**

member

moiety

**morsel**

mouthful

parcel

percentage

portion

quantity

quota

sample

**scrap**

section

segment

share

shred

**slice**

smithereens

snack

specimen

## CURED!

*Sculpture is the art of the hole and the **lump**.*

AUGUSTE RODIN

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

When I got home from work, I saw that the family had left me one **piece** of pie.

In this sentence, I'm not sure just how big—or small—a *piece* of pie I'm going to get to enjoy.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *piece*:

When I got home from work, I saw that the family had left me one \_\_\_\_\_ of pie.

<b>allotment</b>	There are five in the family and five pieces of pie, so they kindly set aside my equal share.
<b>bite</b>	Well, it's not a lot, but at least they left a mouthful.
<b>gob</b>	Using <i>gob</i> here is an informal way to say they left me a huge quantity of pie.
<b>lump</b>	It was an irregularly shaped mass on the plate, so they probably had all picked away at it.
<b>morsel</b>	There was such a small portion left, I could barely get a good taste.
<b>scrap</b>	Unfortunately, all that was left were bits and pieces of leftovers.
<b>slice</b>	Ah, a standard cut of pie—in this case big enough to enjoy fully.

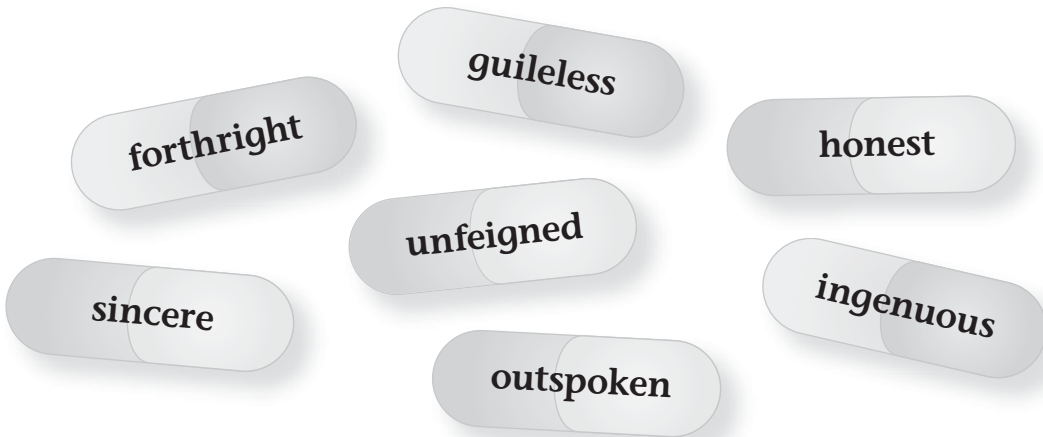
**CURED!**

Right now, I'm as single as a *slice* of American cheese.

NICK CANNON

# plain

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*  
 DEFINITION *straightforward; frank or candid*



## *cures for the common word*

abrupt  
 artless  
 blunt  
 candid  
 direct  
 downright  
**forthright**  
 frank  
 genuine

**guileless**  
**honest**  
 impolite  
**ingenuous**  
 open  
**outspoken**  
 rude  
**sincere**  
 straight arrow

straightforward  
 true  
 unconcealed  
 undisguised  
**unfeigned**  
 uninhibited  
 unreserved  
 unrestricted  
 unvarnished

## CURED!

**Honest** criticism is hard to take, particularly from a relative, a friend, an acquaintance, or a stranger.

FRANKLIN P. JONES

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Robert is known for his **plain** speaking.

We can't be sure what's meant by *plain* here nor whether Robert's speaking style is considered positive or negative.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *plain*:

Robert is known for his \_\_\_\_\_ speaking.

<b>forthright</b>	Robert goes straight to the point, without any subtlety or evasion.
<b>guileless</b>	What Robert says is free of deceit.
<b>honest</b>	Robert always speaks with honorable, upright, and fair intentions.
<b>ingenuous</b>	Robert speaks sincerely and without reservation.
<b>outspoken</b>	This means Robert speaks with frankness and without reservation, but <i>outspoken</i> has a connotation that this may be unwelcome or may be considered inappropriate.
<b>sincere</b>	Robert speaks in a genuine and earnest way—with the added connotation that he speaks with emotion.
<b>unfeigned</b>	Robert is genuine and says what he sincerely feels.

**CURED!**

*I can see clearly now . . . that I was wrong in not acting more decisively and more **forthrightly** in dealing with Watergate.*

RICHARD M. NIXON

# plan

PART OF SPEECH *noun*DEFINITION *a scheme or method of acting, doing, proceeding, making, etc.*

## cures for the common word

aim  
**angle**  
 animus  
 arrangement  
 big picture  
 contrivance  
 deal  
 design  
 device  
 disposition  
 expedient  
**game plan**  
**gimmick**  
 idea

intendment  
 intention  
 layout  
 machination  
 means  
**method**  
 outline  
 pattern  
 picture  
**platform**  
 plot  
 policy  
 procedure  
 program

project  
 proposal  
 proposition  
 purpose  
 scenario  
 scheme  
**stratagem**  
**strategy**  
 suggestion  
 system  
 tactic  
 treatment  
 undertaking  
 way

## CURED!

*Art and science have their meeting point in **method**.*

EDWARD ROBERT BULWER-LYTTON



DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

For his extreme-sports training start-up company, Sam considered a bold marketing **plan**.

We expect something in a field like extreme sports to be bold, and the alternatives give us a much better feel for what Sam wants to accomplish with his marketing.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *plan*:

For his extreme-sports training start-up company, Sam considered a bold marketing \_\_\_\_\_.

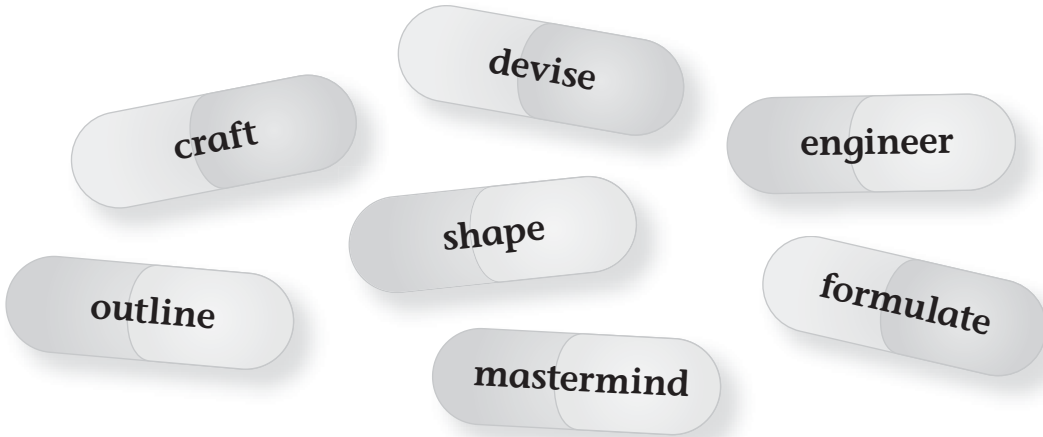
<b>angle</b>	The plan is based on a certain viewpoint or attitude Sam has; <i>angle</i> can imply there is some secret motive to the plan.
<b>game plan</b>	Sam is considering a carefully thought-out course of action.
<b>gimmick</b>	Sam is considering an ingenious or novel approach designed to attract attention and increase appeal.
<b>method</b>	Knowing that most basics of marketing apply to all industries, Sam is considering techniques in accordance with traditional marketing procedures.
<b>platform</b>	Sam decided to base his approach on a body of principles in which he believes.
<b>stratagem</b>	Sam is thinking of an elaborate maneuver to gain an advantage over his competitors.
<b>strategy</b>	Sam is considering a series of maneuvers aimed at a specific goal.

**CURED!**

*We will never try to develop a **strategy** that wins on price. There is nothing unique about pricing.*

JOSH S. WESTON

# plan

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to think out; to arrange a method or scheme to accomplish an objective*

## cures for the common word

arrange  
bargain for  
block out  
blueprint  
brainstorm  
calculate  
concoct  
conspire  
contemplate  
contrive  
cook up  
**craft**  
design  
**devise**  
draft

**engineer**  
figure out  
fix to  
form  
**formulate**  
frame  
hatch  
intrigue  
invent  
line up  
map  
**mastermind**  
meditate  
organize  
**outline**

plot  
prepare  
project  
quarterback  
ready  
reckon on  
represent  
rough in  
scheme  
set out  
**shape**  
sketch  
steer  
trace  
work out

## CURED!

*A man of personality can **formulate** ideals, but only a man of character can achieve them.*

SIR HERBERT READ

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

The committee met to **plan** the next election campaign.

Choosing *plan* here is vague and limits our understanding of the committee's intentions.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *plan*:

The committee met to \_\_\_\_\_ the next election campaign.

<b>craft</b>	The committee devoted great care and ingenuity to construct a successful campaign.
<b>devise</b>	The committee is aiming to elaborate on existing principles or ideas.
<b>engineer</b>	The committee intends to arrange and manage the campaign by some expedient scheme, which leans toward a negative connotation.
<b>formulate</b>	The committee is working to invent a method or system for a successful campaign.
<b>mastermind</b>	The committee wants to skillfully plan and also direct the campaign, though <i>mastermind</i> can have a negative connotation.
<b>outline</b>	The committee is in the beginning stages of summarizing and sketching out the main features of the campaign.
<b>shape</b>	The committee wants to give definite form and organization to the campaign; <i>shape</i> has a positive connotation.

**CURED!**

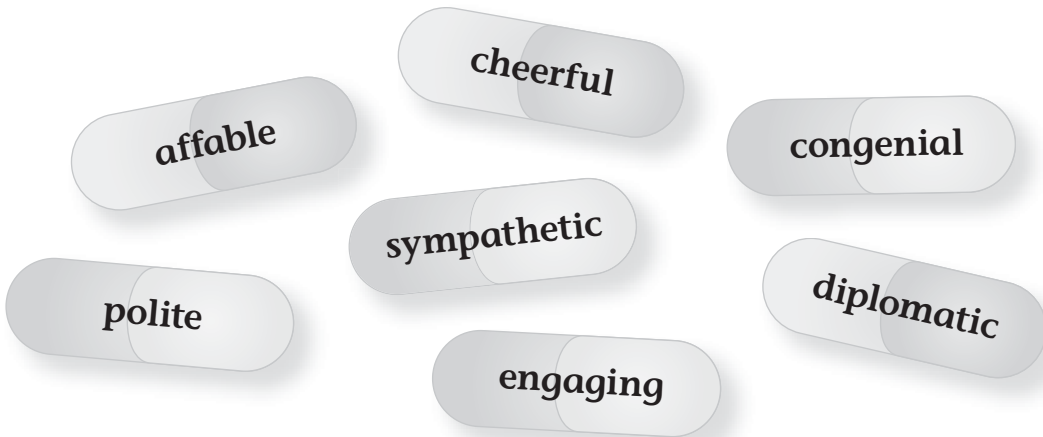
We continue to **shape** our personality all our life. If we knew ourselves perfectly, we should die.

ALBERT CAMUS

# pleasant

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *socially acceptable or adept; polite; amiable; agreeable*



## cures for the common word

affable  
agreeable  
amiable  
amusing  
bland  
charming  
**cheerful**  
cheery  
civilized  
**congenial**  
convivial  
copacetic  
cordial  
delightful  
**diplomatic**

enchancing  
**engaging**  
enjoyable  
fine  
friendly  
fun  
genial  
genteel  
good-humored  
gracious  
gratifying  
jolly  
jovial  
kindly  
likable

lovely  
mild-mannered  
nice  
obliging  
pleasing  
pleasurable  
**polite**  
refreshing  
satisfying  
social  
soft  
sweet  
**sympathetic**  
urbane  
welcome

## CURED!

*The most **engaging** powers of an author are to make new things familiar, familiar things new.*

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

My manager, Alexa, is always **pleasant**.

What a joy to work with a pleasant manager, so using the following alternatives allow me to elaborate on the degree of her good nature.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *pleasant*:

My manager, Alexa, is always \_\_\_\_\_.

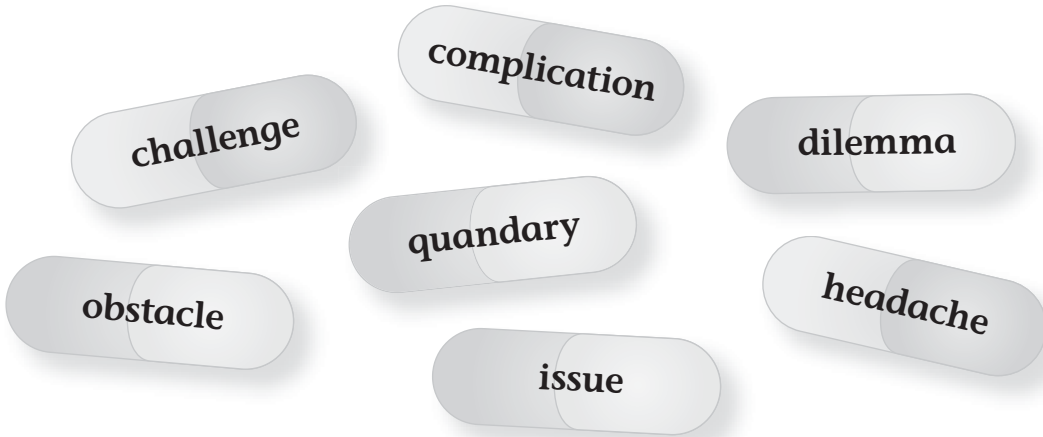
<b>affable</b>	Alexa is easy to approach and talk to, and she's warmly polite.
<b>cheerful</b>	Alexa is always in good spirits, inspiring us to also be cheerful.
<b>congenial</b>	Alexa is agreeable, friendly, and sociable.
<b>diplomatic</b>	Alexa is tactful and very skilled in dealing with sensitive matters and people.
<b>engaging</b>	Alexa is always willing to involve herself and participate—in conversations or in what needs to be done.
<b>polite</b>	Alexa is always courteous, showing good manners toward others.
<b>sympathetic</b>	Alexa is compassionate and shows sympathy and understanding in a wide range of issues and to many people.

**CURED!**

*Polite conversation is rarely either.*

FRAN LEBOWITZ

# problem

PART OF SPEECH *noun*DEFINITION *situation, matter, or person that presents perplexity or difficulty*

## cures for the common word

box  
**challenge**  
**complication**  
 count  
 crunch  
**dilemma**  
 disagreement  
 dispute  
 disputed point

doubt  
**headache**  
 hitch  
 holy mess  
 hot potato  
 hot water  
**issue**  
 mess  
 nut

**obstacle**  
 pickle  
 predicament  
**quandary**  
 question  
 scrape  
 squeeze  
 trouble  
 worriment

## CURED!

*I really resent being liked openly. I don't find any **challenge** in being liked.*

JOHN CASSAVETES

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

Our **problem** is whether to add a new room on a tight budget or wait.

This sentence doesn't make it clear how we are viewing the problem of whether to add on the new room now or be crowded for a while longer and wait until we have more money.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *problem*:

Our \_\_\_\_\_ is whether to add a new room on a tight budget or wait.

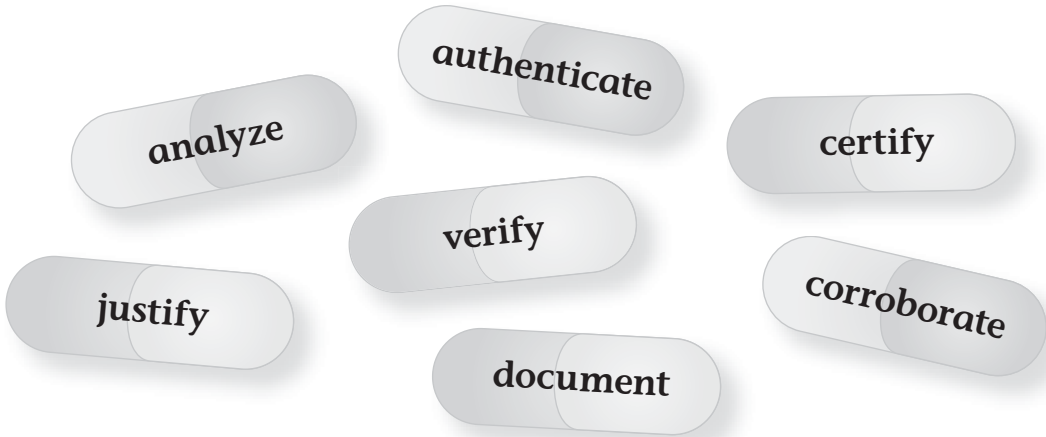
<b>challenge</b>	Our tight budget is certainly a difficulty, but we consider the process of figuring it out to be stimulating.
<b>complication</b>	We thought we had enough money for the remodel, but unexpected things happened to present a problem with the original situation.
<b>dilemma</b>	The need to remodel and the tight budget pose a situation requiring a choice between equally undesirable alternatives.
<b>headache</b>	<i>Headache</i> in this example is an informal—but clear—way of saying that not being able to reach a decision is annoying and bothersome and gives us both a need to head for the aspirin.
<b>issue</b>	Deciding which option is most important will determine our choice.
<b>obstacle</b>	The tight budget is hindering our progress, but it won't stop us from making a sound decision.
<b>quandary</b>	We're in a state of uncertainty about what to do, caught between equally unfavorable options.

## CURED!

*The greatest **obstacle** to discovering the shape of the earth, the continents, and the oceans was not ignorance but the illusion of knowledge.*

DANIEL BOORSTIN

# prove

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to establish the truth or genuineness of, as by evidence or argument*

## cures for the common word

affirm  
**analyze**  
 ascertain  
 assay  
 attest  
**authenticate**  
 back  
 bear out  
**certify**  
 check  
 confirm  
 convince  
**corroborate**  
 declare  
 demonstrate

determine  
**document**  
 end up  
 establish  
 evidence  
 evince  
 examine  
 experiment  
 explain  
 find  
 fix  
**justify**  
 make evident  
 manifest  
 pan out

result  
 settle  
 show  
 substantiate  
 sustain  
 test  
 testify  
 trial  
 try  
 turn out  
 uphold  
 validate  
**verify**  
 warrant  
 witness

## CURED!

Golfers have **analyzed** the game in order to find "the secret." There is no secret.

HENRY COTTON



DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

The defense attorney was determined to **prove** his client's story.

Even if we assume his client is being honest, *prove* doesn't give us much information as to how the attorney will show his client's story to be true.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *prove*:

The defense attorney was determined to \_\_\_\_\_ his client's story.

<b>analyze</b>	The attorney is going to examine the evidence critically, to bring out the essential elements so as to identify causes and key factors.
<b>authenticate</b>	The attorney is going to establish the story as genuine, with the help of an expert in the field.
<b>certify</b>	The attorney will present reliable information to attest to the truth of the story.
<b>corroborate</b>	The attorney has evidence, facts, or a person who can establish or strengthen his client's story.
<b>document</b>	The attorney will furnish specific references, citations, and so on, in support of the statements his client made.
<b>justify</b>	Even if his client might have broken a law, the attorney wants to show that his client's actions were just or right.
<b>verify</b>	The attorney will substantiate the truth of his client's story by use of a combination of evidence and testimony.

**CURED!**

*The first thing any comedian does on getting an unscheduled laugh is to **verify** the state of his buttons.*

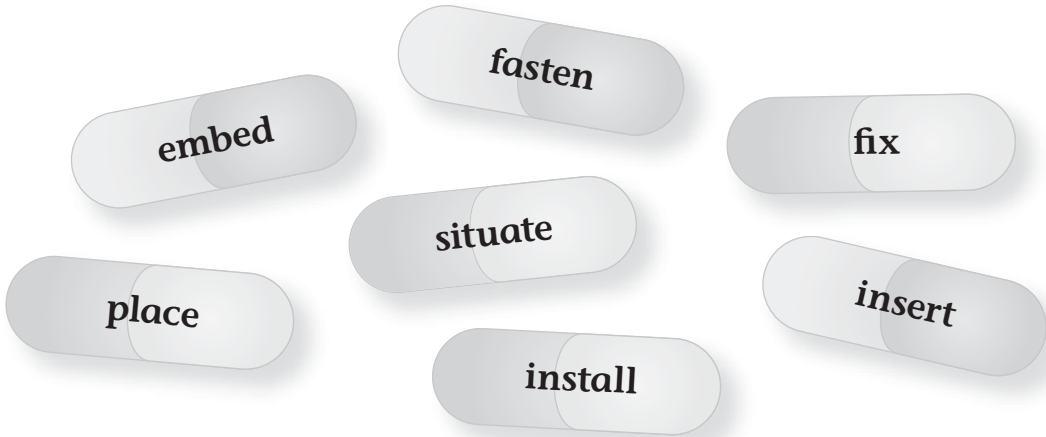
W. C. FIELDS

# put

PART OF SPEECH

*verb*

DEFINITION

*to move or place anything into or out of a specific location or position*

## *cures for the common word*

bring  
concenter  
concentrate  
deposit  
**embed**  
establish  
**fasten**  
**fix**  
fixate  
focus

**insert**  
**install**  
invest  
lay  
nail  
park  
peg  
**place**  
plank  
plant

plop  
plunk  
quarter  
repose  
rest  
rivet  
seat  
settle  
**situate**  
stick

## CURED!

COFFEE.EXE missing. *Insert* cup and press any key.

ANONYMOUS

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Safely **put** the battery in its correct engine compartment.

We know the battery needs to be in the appropriate engine compartment but not specifically how the battery needs to be placed.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *put*:

Safely \_\_\_\_\_ the battery in its correct engine compartment.

<b>embed</b>	The battery needs to be placed in a compartment that completely surrounds it.
<b>fasten</b>	The battery needs to be attached securely to something else—like the compartment hatch.
<b>fix</b>	The battery needs to be stable in the compartment.
<b>insert</b>	The battery needs to be set into, between, or among the appropriate location in the engine compartment.
<b>install</b>	The battery needs to be placed in position and connected for proper use.
<b>place</b>	The battery needs to be put in the compartment in the proper position.
<b>situate</b>	We need to be sure the battery is put in the correct compartment.

**CURED!**

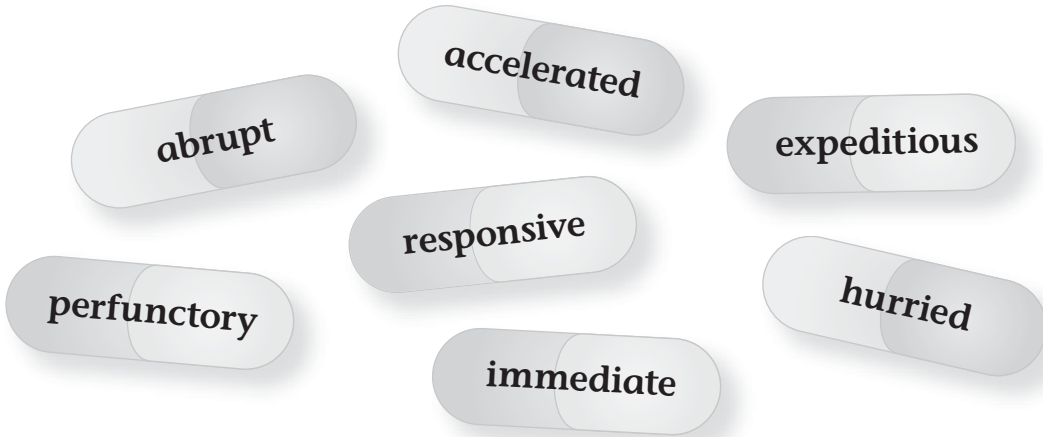
*Give me a lever long enough and a fulcrum on which to **place** it, and I shall move the world.*

ARCHIMEDES

# quick

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *done, proceeding, or occurring with promptness or rapidity*



## cures for the common word

**abrupt**  
**accelerated**  
 active  
 agile  
 alert  
 animated  
 ASAP  
 breakneck  
 brief  
 brisk  
 cursory  
 curt  
 double time  
 energetic

**expeditious**  
 express  
 fleet  
 hasty  
 headlong  
**hurried**  
**immediate**  
 impatient  
 impetuous  
 instantaneous  
 keen  
 lively  
 mercurial  
 nimble

**perfunctory**  
 posthaste  
 prompt  
 pronto  
 rapid  
**responsive**  
 snappy  
 speedy  
 spirited  
 sprightly  
 spry  
 sudden  
 swift  
 winged

## CURED!

*The difficult can be done **immediately**, the impossible takes a little longer.*

ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

We received a **quick** response from the loan committee—"declined."

Though we're not thrilled that the answer was no, the following alternatives give a clearer indication of how we felt about the committee's decision process.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *quick*:

We received a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ response from the loan committee—"declined."

<b>abrupt</b>	The decision was fast and also delivered in a brusque manner, as if from the surface facts, we didn't fit in a formula and they wouldn't consider us beyond the easy formula.
<b>accelerated</b>	The decision came in less time than required, and some of the detail to be considered might have been eliminated.
<b>expeditious</b>	Though the decision came with speed and efficiency, the connotation is that the facts were considered thoroughly.
<b>hurried</b>	We feel the committee was pushed—for some reason or by someone—to make a rapid decision and possibly did not give our request its fully due review.
<b>immediate</b>	The decision occurred without delay.
<b>perfunctory</b>	The committee made a hasty decision without thorough attention to detail.
<b>responsive</b>	The committee readily reacted to our appeals and efforts.

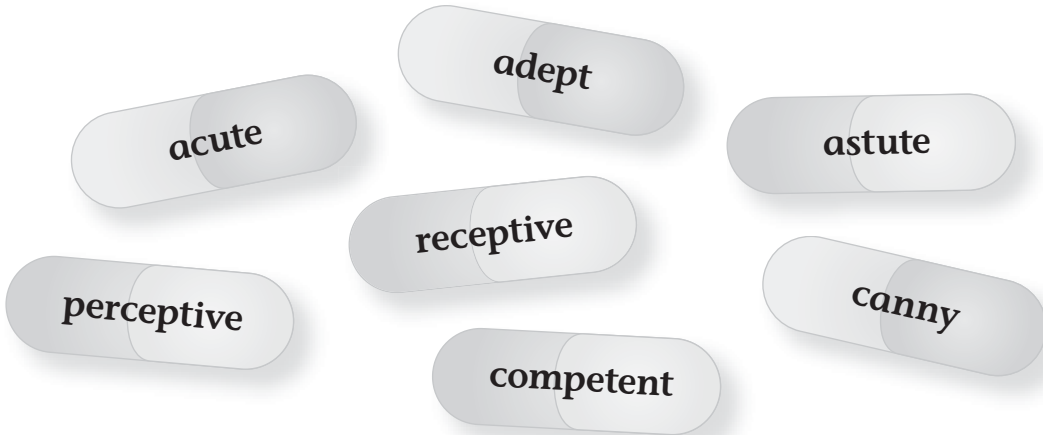
**CURED!**

*The **hurried** are not competent; the competent are not hurried.*

CHINESE PROVERB

# quick

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*  
 DEFINITION *prompt to understand, learn, etc.*



## *cures for the common word*

able  
 active  
**acute**  
**adept**  
 adroit  
 all there  
 apt  
**astute**  
 bright  
**canny**  
 capable  
 clever

**competent**  
 deft  
 dexterous  
 discerning  
 effective  
 effectual  
 intelligent  
 keen  
 knowing  
 nimble-witted  
**perceptive**  
 perspicacious

prompt  
 quick-witted  
 ready  
**receptive**  
 savvy  
 sharp  
 shrewd  
 skillful  
 slick  
 vigorous  
 whiz  
 wise

## CURED!

*Any event, once it has occurred, can be made to appear inevitable by a **competent** historian.*

LEE SIMONSON

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*Caitlin is a **quick** learner.

She's always been fast at learning in several areas, but *quick* doesn't give us much specific information about her particular learning skills.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *quick*:

Caitlin is a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ learner.

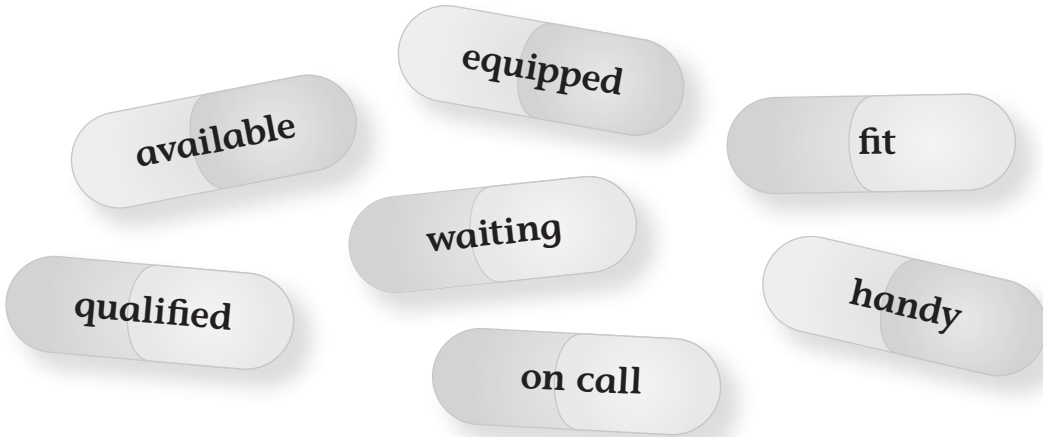
<b>acute</b>	Caitlin has a sharp intellect, a keen sense of perception, or both.
<b>adept</b>	Caitlin is very skilled in her method of learning.
<b>astute</b>	Caitlin is clever and observant in her learning.
<b>canny</b>	Caitlin shows keen and sound judgment in what and how she studies or learns.
<b>competent</b>	Caitlin learns adequately for whichever topic she's studying.
<b>perceptive</b>	Caitlin shows keen insight, understanding, or intuition about the topic she's studying.
<b>receptive</b>	Caitlin has a wonderful ability to easily receive knowledge, ideas, etc.

**CURED!**

*What helps me go forward is that I stay **receptive**, I feel that anything can happen.*

ANOUK AIMEE

# ready

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *prepared or available for service, action, or progress*

## cures for the common word

accessible  
adjusted  
all set  
anticipating  
apt  
arranged  
at hand  
**available**  
bagged  
completed  
convenient

covered  
**equipped**  
expectant  
**fit**  
fixed for  
**handy**  
in line  
in order  
in place  
in position  
near

**on call**  
on hand  
on tap  
open to  
organized  
primed  
**qualified**  
ripe  
set  
**waiting**  
wired

## CURED!

*Television is the first truly democratic culture, the first culture **available** to everybody and entirely governed by what the people want. The most terrifying thing is what people do want.*

CLIVE BARNES



DIAGNOSIS *vague*

The boat is **ready** for launch.

This sentence doesn't give us clear information about the boat's readiness to launch.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *ready*:

The boat is \_\_\_\_\_ for launch.

<b>available</b>	Perhaps it's a rental boat, and now it's ready for our use.
<b>equipped</b>	The boat is supplied with the necessities, such as tools or provisions.
<b>fit</b>	I'm glad to know the boat is in good physical condition.
<b>handy</b>	The boat is within easy reach or conveniently available when I am.
<b>on call</b>	The boat is available on short notice—all I have to do is call.
<b>qualified</b>	The boat has all the qualities and features required by law or custom.
<b>waiting</b>	The boat is remaining inactive or stationary—in anticipation of being ready when I am.

**CURED!**

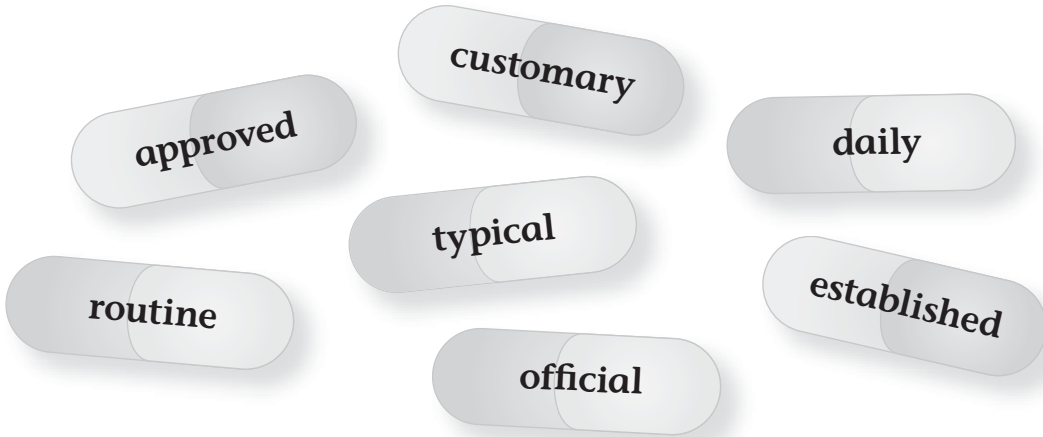
Somewhere, something incredible is **waiting** to be known.

BLAISE PASCAL

# regular

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *usual; normal; customary; recurring at fixed times; periodic*



## *cures for the common word*

### **approved**

bona fide  
classic  
common  
commonplace  
correct  
**customary**  
**daily**  
**established**  
everyday  
formal

### general

habitual  
lawful  
legitimate  
natural  
normal  
**official**  
ordinary  
orthodox  
prevailing  
prevalent

### proper

**routine**  
run-of-the-mill  
sanctioned  
standard  
time-honored  
traditional  
**typical**  
unexceptional  
unvarying  
usual

## CURED!

*It is dangerous to be right in matters on which the **established** authorities are wrong.*

FRANÇOIS-MARIE AROUET VOLTAIRE

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

The driver followed his **regular** route, despite the heavy snows.

There are several definitions for *regular*, so the alternatives tell us more precisely about the driver's route.

## powerful remedies

Substitute an alternative remedy for *regular*:

The driver followed his \_\_\_\_\_ route, despite the heavy snows.

<b>approved</b>	The driver followed the route that was agreed to by the company he works for, his customers, or the laws—even though it isn't his preferred route.
<b>customary</b>	The driver followed his usual, habitual route.
<b>daily</b>	The driver took the same route he does every single workday.
<b>established</b>	The driver followed a route that is not necessarily required but conforms to accepted standards.
<b>official</b>	The driver took the route that was authorized and dictated by the company he works for.
<b>routine</b>	Like <i>customary</i> , <i>routine</i> indicates an unvarying and habitual route but with the connotation of it being unimaginative or rote procedure for the driver.
<b>typical</b>	The driver can take different routes, and the route he takes is representative or characteristic of the route most drivers take.

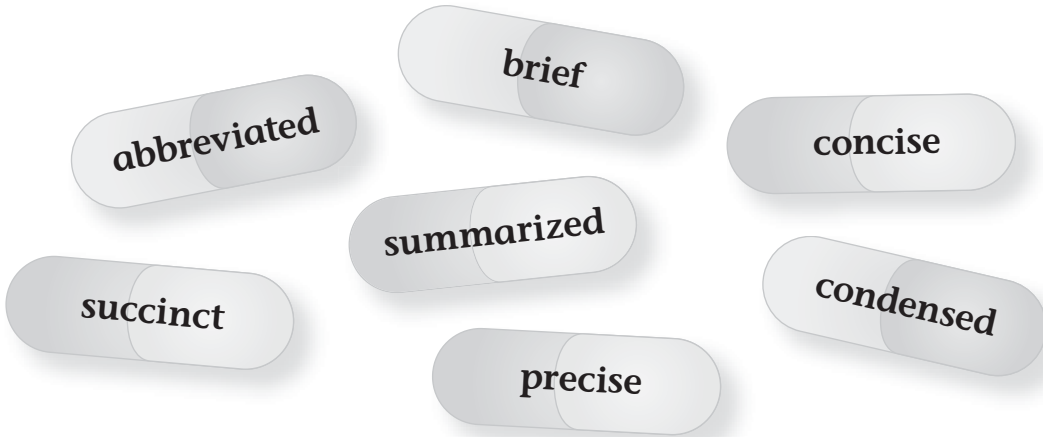
## CURED!

*The FBI, to its credit in a self-serving sort of way, rejects the **routine** use of the polygraph on its own people.*

ALDRICH AMES

# short

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*  
 DEFINITION *abridged; brief or concise*



## cures for the common word

**abbreviated**  
 aphoristic  
 bare  
 boiled-down  
 brevilouquent  
**brief**  
 compendary  
 compendious  
 compressed  
**concise**  
**condensed**  
 curtailed

curtate  
 cut short  
 decreased  
 decurtate  
 diminished  
 epigrammatic  
 fleeting  
 laconic  
 lessened  
 little  
 momentary  
 pithy

pointed  
**precise**  
 sententious  
 shortened  
 short-lived  
 short-term  
**succinct**  
**summarized**  
 summary  
 terse  
 undersized  
 unsustained

## CURED!

Vigorous writing is **concise**.

WILLIAM STRUNK JR.

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

I had time before the meeting to read the **short** report.

We can't tell from the use of *short* if the report started out by being brief or was cut down—and if so, appropriately or not.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *short*:

I had time before the meeting to read the \_\_\_\_\_ report.

<b>abbreviated</b>	The report has been shortened to a smaller version of the original—and we don't know if important parts of it have been omitted.
<b>brief</b>	The full report is of short duration.
<b>concise</b>	The full report is successful in being comprehensive in scope while using few words.
<b>condensed</b>	The report has been reduced to a shorter form but retains all the pertinent information.
<b>precise</b>	The report is sharply exact and accurate, though <i>precise</i> doesn't give any indication of its length.
<b>succinct</b>	The report is characterized by its verbal brevity, with no wasted words.
<b>summarized</b>	The report includes all of the primary points of a larger report, expressed in a concise form—with the connotation that none of the vital information has been lost.

**CURED!**

*There is no more difficult art to acquire than the art of observation, and for some men it is quite as difficult to record an observation in **brief** and plain language.*

WILLIAM OSLER

# simple

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *clear; easy to understand, deal with, use, etc.*

## cures for the common word

**child's play**

clean

easy

**effortless****elementary**

facile

incomplex

**intelligible**

light

lucid

**manageable**

mild

no problem

no sweat

picnic

plain

quiet

royal

**self-explanatory**

smooth

**snap****straightforward**

transparent

**uncomplicated**

understandable

uninvolved

unmistakable

unmixed

untroublesome

vanilla

## CURED!

*Unless one is a genius, it is best to aim at being **intelligible**.*

ANTHONY HOPE

DIAGNOSIS *confusing*

Daisy hoped the test questions would be **simple**.

In this sentence, it's not clear if Daisy might be worried that she didn't study sufficiently for the test or if her concern is based on the difficulty of the test subject itself.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *simple*:

Daisy hoped the test questions would be \_\_\_\_\_.

<b>child's play</b>	This is an informal way to say that Daisy hopes she can easily answer the questions, because the questions are easy or because Daisy studied so well she knows the content.
<b>effortless</b>	Daisy hopes the questions will require no effort to answer.
<b>elementary</b>	Daisy hopes the questions relate to the fundamental or simplest aspects of the subject.
<b>intelligible</b>	Daisy hopes the questions are written in a clear way that she can easily understand.
<b>self-explanatory</b>	Daisy hopes that what the questions are asking for is obvious, needing no further explanation.
<b>straightforward</b>	Daisy hopes the questions are free from ambiguity.
<b>uncomplicated</b>	Daisy hopes the questions are not complex or involved.

**CURED!**

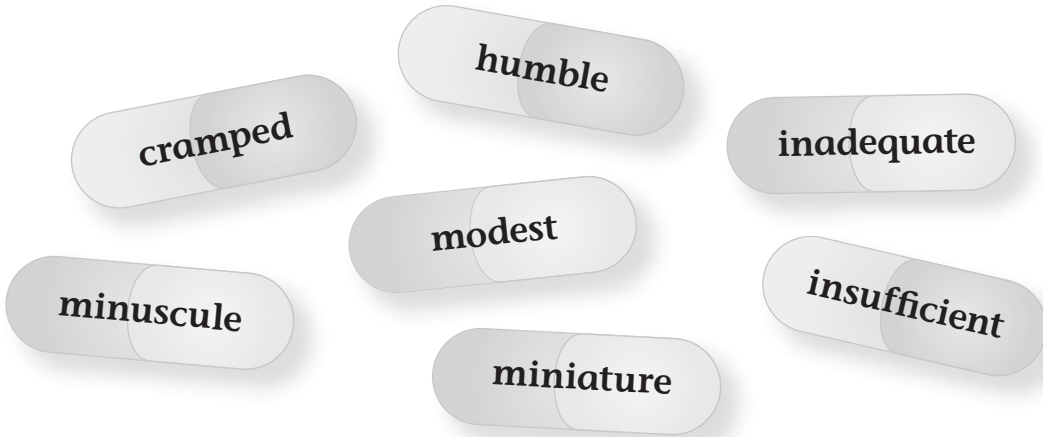
Nothing so completely baffles one who is full of trick and duplicity himself, than **straightforward** and simple integrity in another.

CHARLES CALEB COLTON

# small

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*

DEFINITION *of limited size; of comparatively restricted dimensions; not big*



## cures for the common word

baby  
bantam  
bitty  
**cramped**  
diminutive  
**humble**  
immature  
**inadequate**  
inconsequential  
inconsiderable  
insignificant  
**insufficient**  
limited  
little  
meager

microscopic  
mini  
**miniature**  
**minuscule**  
minute  
**modest**  
narrow  
paltry  
petite  
petty  
picayune  
pint-sized  
pitiful  
pocket-sized  
poor

puny  
pygmy  
runty  
scanty  
short  
slight  
small-scale  
stunted  
teeny  
toy  
trifling  
trivial  
undersized  
wee  
young

## CURED!

*It's hard to be **humble**, when you're as great as I am.*

MUHAMMAD ALI



DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

The **small** house down the block is for sale.

For some, *small* would be ideal, and for others it wouldn't be, and in this sentence we're not sure whether the house being small is positive or negative.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *small*:

The \_\_\_\_\_ house down the block is for sale.

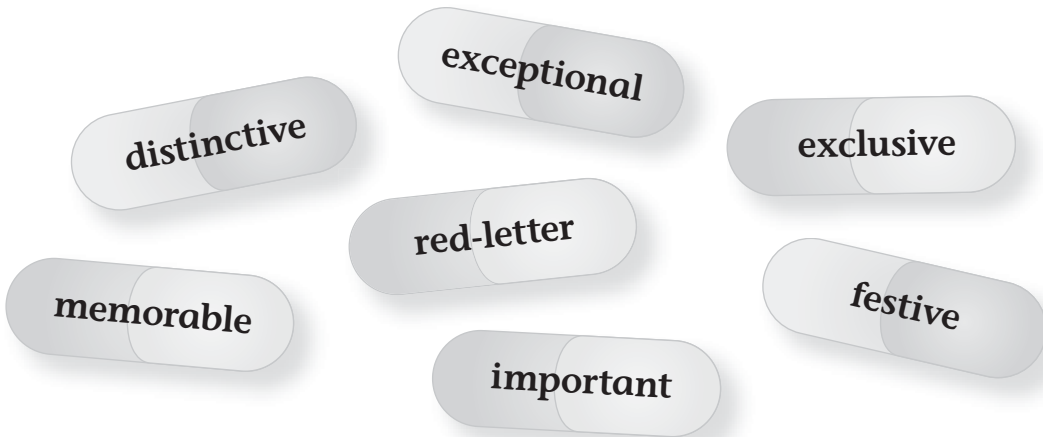
<b>cramped</b>	The house is severely limited in space.
<b>humble</b>	The house is not one considered high in quality—in reference to its “rank” in relation to others in the neighborhood, as opposed to in reference to its stability.
<b>inadequate</b>	The house doesn't offer us enough room or other features to be suitable for the wants of our family.
<b>insufficient</b>	The house is lacking in what we absolutely require.
<b>miniature</b>	This indicates the house is a small-scale representation of a full-sized house.
<b>minuscule</b>	It's a very tiny house, maybe just studio sized.
<b>modest</b>	The house is a nice one, just free from ostentation or showy extravagance.

**CURED!**

*Nobody who takes on anything big and tough can afford to be **modest**.*

GEORGE ORSON WELLES

# special

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *distinguished or different from what is ordinary or usual*

## cures for the common word

certain  
characteristic  
chief  
choice  
defined  
definite  
designated  
determinate  
different  
**distinctive**  
earmarked  
**exceptional**  
**exclusive**  
express  
extraordinary

**festive**  
first  
gala  
**important**  
individual  
limited  
main  
major  
marked  
**memorable**  
momentous  
particular  
peculiar  
personal  
primary

primo  
proper  
rare  
**red-letter**  
reserved  
restricted  
select  
set  
significant  
smashing  
specialized  
specific  
uncommon  
unique  
unusual

## CURED!

*Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgement that something else is more **important** than fear.*

AMBROSE REDMOON

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

John and Tawni want to plan a **special** day together.

*Special* implies that John and Tawni are planning a wonderful day, but it doesn't tell us enough about in what way it will not be a typical day.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *special*:

John and Tawni want to plan a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ day together.

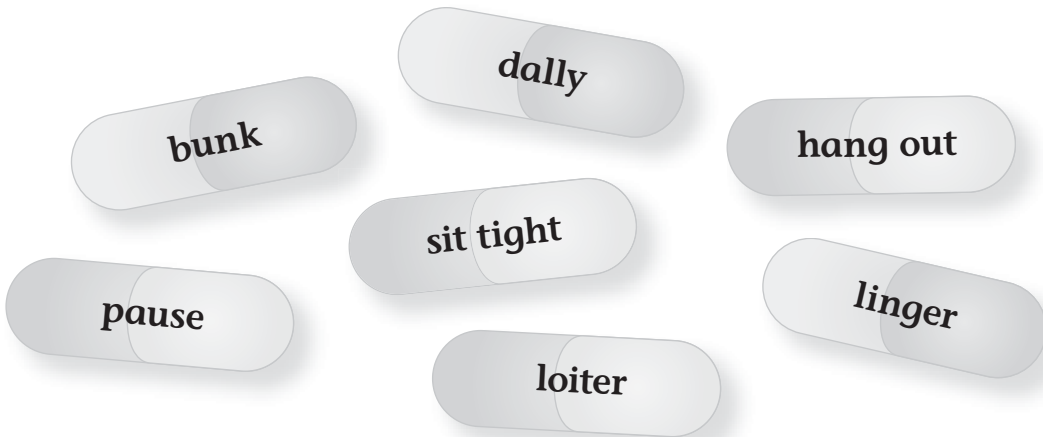
<b>distinctive</b>	They want the day to have a unique and different quality, implying in a positive way.
<b>exceptional</b>	They are planning something for their day that will be a rare instance and/or unusually excellent.
<b>exclusive</b>	The connotation is that they want a day together alone—omitting anyone else from their plans.
<b>festive</b>	They are planning a day that's joyous, full of fun and gaiety.
<b>important</b>	They want to do something of great significance to them both.
<b>memorable</b>	It will be a day worth remembering.
<b>red-letter</b>	This is an informal way to say it will be a memorable day that is especially important or happy for them.

**CURED!**

Good design is making something intelligible and **memorable**. Great design is making something memorable and meaningful.

DIETER RAMS

# stay

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to spend some time in a place, in a situation, with a person or group, etc.*

## cures for the common word

abide  
bide  
**bunk**  
continue  
**dally**  
delay  
dillydally  
endure  
establish oneself  
halt  
hang  
hang about  
hang around  
hang in

**hang out**  
hover  
lag  
last  
**linger**  
**loiter**  
nest  
outstay  
**pause**  
perch  
procrastinate  
remain  
reprieve  
reside

respite  
roost  
settle  
**sit tight**  
sojourn  
squat  
stand  
stay out  
stay put  
stick around  
stop  
sweat  
sweat it  
tarry

## CURED!

*Now and then it's good to **pause** in our pursuit of happiness and just be happy.*

GUILLAUME APOLLINAIRE

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Bert wanted to **stay** at Ernie's house after school.

This sentence doesn't tell us much about why and for how long Bert wants to stay at Ernie's house.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *stay*:

Bert wanted to \_\_\_\_\_ at Ernie's house after school.

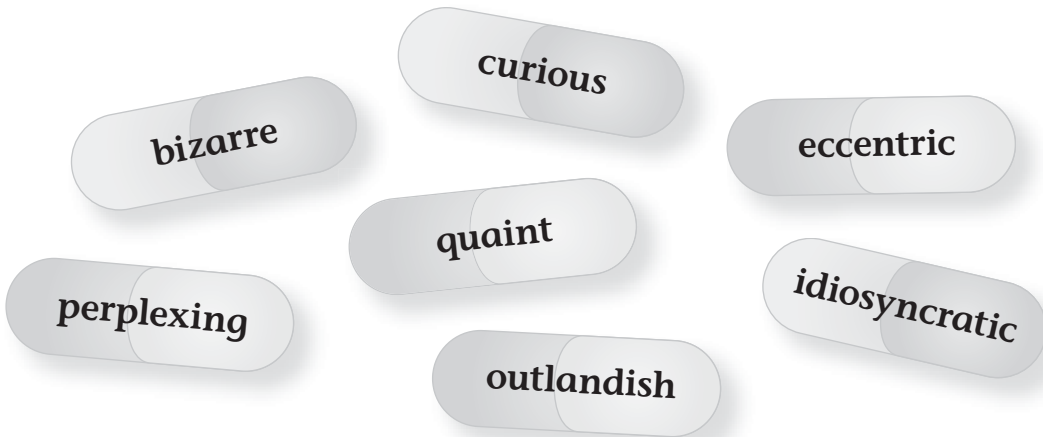
<b>bunk</b>	Bert wants to sleep over at Ernie's.
<b>dally</b>	Bert may be having fun, but choosing <i>dally</i> means to waste time, so maybe he's supposed to be doing homework or chores.
<b>hang out</b>	Bert wants to spend time at Ernie's because he likes Ernie and the things they do there.
<b>linger</b>	Bert is reluctant to leave, so he's staying longer than expected.
<b>loiter</b>	Bert is lingering aimlessly at Ernie's—and Ernie isn't even home.
<b>pause</b>	Bert just wanted to stop for a short time at Ernie's on his way home.
<b>sit tight</b>	This is a slang expression meaning Bert has decided to stay at Ernie's for a while, biding his time and taking no action.

**CURED!**

*Why hurry over beautiful things? Why not **linger** and enjoy them?*

CLARA SCHUMANN

# strange

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *deviating; unusual, extraordinary, or curious; odd*

## cures for the common word

aberrant  
abnormal  
astonishing  
astounding  
atypical  
**bizarre**  
**curious**  
different  
**eccentric**  
erratic  
exceptional  
extraordinary  
fantastic  
far-out  
funny

**idiosyncratic**  
ignorant  
inexperienced  
irregular  
marvelous  
mystifying  
new  
newfangled  
odd  
oddball  
off  
offbeat  
**outlandish**  
out-of-the-way  
peculiar

**perplexing**  
**quaint**  
queer  
rare  
remarkable  
singular  
unaccountable  
unaccustomed  
uncanny  
uncommon  
unfamiliar  
unheard of  
unseasoned  
unusual  
weird

## CURED!

*Middle Age is that **perplexing** time of life when we hear two voices calling us, one saying, "Why not?" and the other, "Why bother?"*

SYDNEY J. HARRIS

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

The man's **strange** clothes made him stand out.

There are a lot of different types of clothes that could be considered strange, partially determined by the viewer, and *strange* in this sentence doesn't indicate what about the man's clothes made him stand out.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *strange*:

The man's \_\_\_\_\_ clothes made him stand out.

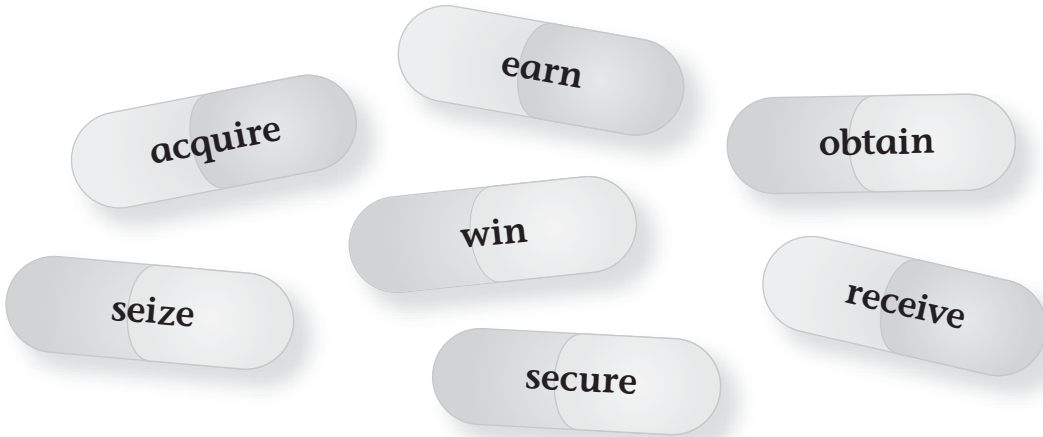
<b>bizarre</b>	His clothing was markedly unusual in appearance—in fact, outrageously or whimsically odd.
<b>curious</b>	His clothes aroused attention, being inexplicable or highly unusual—for example, a football uniform as he walked his dog.
<b>eccentric</b>	His way of dressing deviated from the conventional—for example, a top hat with his workout clothes.
<b>idiosyncratic</b>	Though we don't have a clue as to why he's dressing that way, it likely makes perfect sense to him.
<b>outlandish</b>	His clothing was freakishly odd in appearance, but the connotation is that it is simply wildly inappropriate for the occasion.
<b>perplexing</b>	His clothing is confusing—for example, wearing a heavy wool coat on a hot and sunny day.
<b>quaint</b>	His clothing has an old-fashioned attractiveness or charm and is oddly picturesque in a pleasing or amusing way.

**CURED!**

*Eccentric behavior is not routinely noticed around a movie set.*

GENE TIERNEY

# take

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to get into one's hold or possession by voluntary action or by force, skill, or artifice*

## cures for the common word

abduct  
accept  
**acquire**  
arrest  
attain  
bag  
capture  
carry off  
carve out  
catch  
choose  
clasp  
clutch  
collar  
collect

**earn**  
ensnare  
entrap  
gain possession  
gather up  
glom  
grab  
grasp  
grip  
handle  
haul in  
have  
hold  
nab  
nail

**obtain**  
overtake  
pick up  
pull in  
reach  
reap  
**receive**  
**secure**  
**seize**  
select  
snag  
snatch  
strike  
take in  
**win**

## CURED!

*Happiness is like those palaces in fairy tales . . . we must fight in order to **obtain** it.*

ALEXANDRE DUMAS



DIAGNOSIS *vague*

The investors will **take** control of the company next week.

Though *take* often has a very neutral meaning—neither positive or negative—in this sentence it gives the sense that the takeover may have been hostile; whereas, the following alternatives give us a truer picture.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *take*:

The investors will \_\_\_\_\_ control of the company next week.

<b>acquire</b>	The investors will come into possession or ownership of the company, possibly simply by purchase.
<b>earn</b>	The investors will deservedly have control.
<b>obtain</b>	The investors will come into possession of the company either through their efforts or by a request.
<b>receive</b>	Possession of the company was offered to the investors—most likely for a price or an exchange of some kind—and the investors have agreed.
<b>secure</b>	The investors thought they would be taking control, and now they will be able to ensure this.
<b>seize</b>	The investors have found a way to take possession by force; the connotation is that it may happen in an underhanded and partially secretive way.
<b>win</b>	The investors will gain control through their labor or through a successful competition, such as winning a bidding war for the company.

**CURED!**

*What a child doesn't **receive** he can seldom later give.*

P. D. JAMES

# take

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to accept, handle, or deal with in a particular way; to endure*

## *cures for the common word*

**abide**

accept

**accommodate**

bear

bear with

**brave**

brook

contain

give access

go

go through

hack

hang in

hang on

hang tough

hold

let in

**live with**

lump it

receive

ride out

stand

stand for

stomach

submit to

suffer

swallow

take it

**tolerate**

undergo

weather

**welcome****withstand**

## CURED!

*I respect those who resist me; but I cannot **tolerate** them.*

CHARLES DEGAULLE

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

My boyfriend can **take** the cold weather much better than I can.

We can't tell from this use of *take* much about his attitude toward cold weather—if he loves the cold or just puts up with it.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *take*:

My boyfriend can \_\_\_\_\_ the cold weather much better than I can.

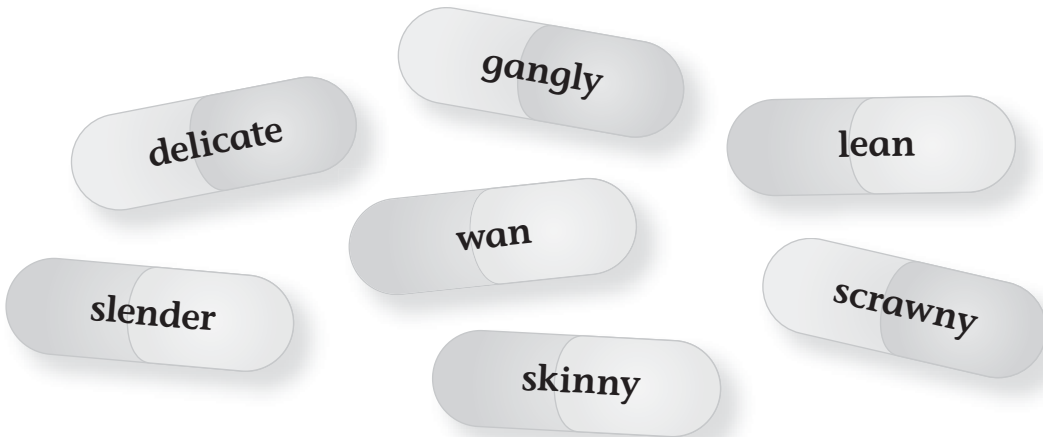
<b>abide</b>	He can tolerate and withstand the cold without yielding or submitting to freezing or to finding a way to get warm.
<b>accommodate</b>	He manages to adapt to make being cold suitable for him.
<b>brave</b>	He faces the cold courageously.
<b>live with</b>	He can accept the cold weather perhaps as a trade-off for other advantages that go with a cold-weather climate.
<b>tolerate</b>	He can endure the cold without even being upset by being cold.
<b>welcome</b>	He actually accepts the cold with pleasure.
<b>withstand</b>	He successfully resists and endures the cold, whereas I just have to find a fireplace or a heater.

**CURED!**

*Fortune favors the **brave**.*

VIRGIL

# thin

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*DEFINITION *of relatively slight consistency; scant; not abundant or plentiful*

## cures for the common word

attenuated  
beanpole  
bony  
cadaverous  
**delicate**  
emaciated  
ethereal  
featherweight  
fine  
fragile  
**gangly**  
gaunt  
haggard  
lanky  
**lean**

lightweight  
meager  
narrow  
peaked  
pinched  
puny  
rangy  
rarefied  
rawboned  
reedy  
rickety  
**scrawny**  
shriveled  
skeletal  
**skinny**

**slender**  
slight  
slim  
small  
spare  
spindly  
starved  
subtle  
threadlike  
twiggy  
undernourished  
underweight  
**wan**  
wasted  
wizened

## CURED!

*A wise child pleases his father; a **skinny** dog shames his master.*

CHINESE PROVERB

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

As a teenager, Nicole was always **thin**.

*Thin* can very easily have either positive or negative connotations, so we want to be more specific—and perhaps more “gentle” when describing Nicole’s appearance.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *thin*:

As a teenager, Nicole was always \_\_\_\_\_.

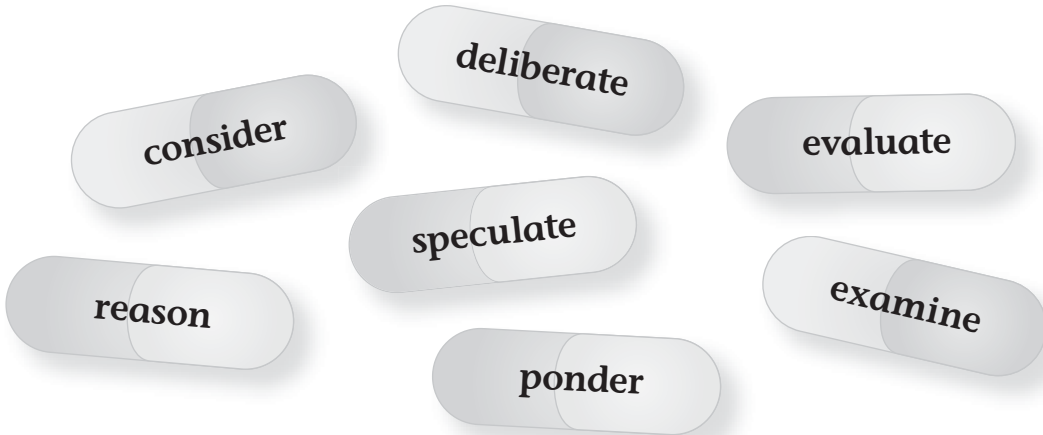
<b>delicate</b>	Nicole had such a slight build that she looked fragile and might easily be susceptible to illness.
<b>gangly</b>	Nicole was awkwardly tall and spindly.
<b>lean</b>	Nicole didn’t have much fat and looks healthy.
<b>scrawny</b>	Nicole was so excessively thin, she looked like she was starving.
<b>skinny</b>	<i>Skinny</i> is a less-than-flattering way of saying that Nicole is thin.
<b>slender</b>	Nicole’s slight figure gave the impression of her being light and graceful.
<b>wan</b>	Nicole’s weight gave her the appearance of being ill, fatigued, and even unhappy.

**CURED!**

The **delicate** and infirm go for sympathy, not to the well and buoyant, but to those who have suffered like themselves.

CATHERINE E. BEECHER

# think

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to contemplate; to employ one's mind rationally and objectively*

## cures for the common word

analyze  
appraise  
appreciate  
brood  
cerebrate  
chew  
cogitate  
comprehend  
conceive  
**consider**  
deduce  
**deliberate**  
estimate

**evaluate**  
**examine**  
figure out  
ideate  
imagine  
infer  
intellectualize  
judge  
logicalize  
meditate  
mull  
mull over  
muse

noodle  
**ponder**  
rationalize  
**reason**  
reflect  
resolve  
ruminate  
sort out  
**speculate**  
stew  
study  
turn over  
weigh

## CURED!

When in charge, **ponder**. When in trouble, delegate. When in doubt, mumble.

SOLWAY COMMUNITY PRESS

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

**Think** long and hard about the consequences before you quit school.

Good advice, though choosing *think* for this sentence doesn't tell us how carefully and thoroughly you're considering the consequences.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *think*:

\_\_\_\_\_ long and hard about the consequences before you quit school.

<b>consider</b>	It's important to reflect carefully about the decision you're about to make; the connotation is that you're taking the situation seriously.
<b>deliberate</b>	You will think carefully and slowly about the choice to be made and may consult with another or others in the process of reaching a decision.
<b>evaluate</b>	You're judging the significance, worth, or quality of your decision.
<b>examine</b>	You're taking time to carefully inspect, scrutinize, and investigate the possible sequences.
<b>ponder</b>	You're considering your decision deeply and thoroughly.
<b>reason</b>	You are aiming to form conclusions based on the facts you know.
<b>speculate</b>	You're casually talking over the consequences conjecturally without sufficient reason to reach a conclusion.

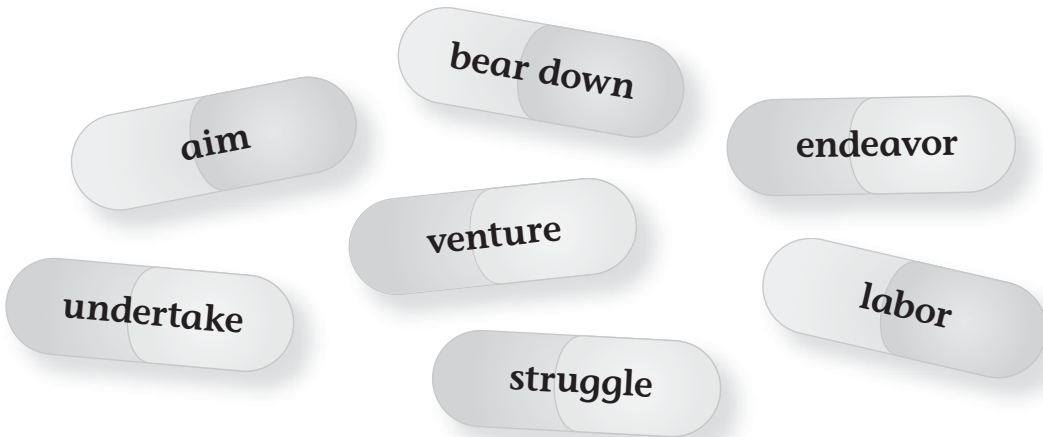
**CURED!**

*I don't **consider** myself bald, I'm just taller than my hair.*

TOM SHARPE

## try

PART OF SPEECH	<i>verb</i>
DEFINITION	<i>to attempt to do or accomplish</i>

*cures for the common word***aim**

aspire  
attack  
attempt  
**bear down**  
buckle down  
compete  
contend  
contest  
drive for

**endeavor**

essay  
exert oneself  
go after  
hump it  
**labor**  
lay to  
propose  
risk  
seek

shoot for  
speculate  
strive

**struggle**

tackle  
**undertake**  
**venture**  
vie for  
work  
wrangle

CURED!

*Let us **endeavor** to live, so that when we die, even the undertaker will be sorry.*

MARK TWAIN



DIAGNOSIS *vague*

I'm going to **try** to learn French before our family vacation.

*Try* doesn't indicate the strength of my commitment or say how hard I'm going to try or how successful I think I'll be.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *try*:

I'm going to \_\_\_\_\_ to learn French before our family vacation.

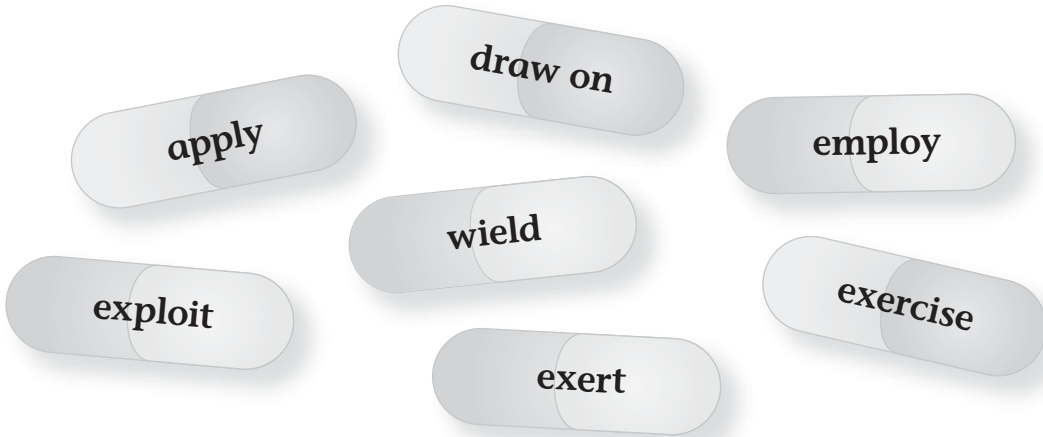
<b>aim</b>	The key point is that I'm directing my efforts to learning <i>before</i> our vacation.
<b>bear down</b>	I'm going to work harder than I have in the past to learn, intensifying my efforts.
<b>endeavor</b>	I'm going to dedicate real effort in attempting to learn, but the implication is that I feel I may not be completely successful.
<b>labor</b>	I'm going to work hard toward my goal of learning French.
<b>struggle</b>	I'll be strenuously engaged in what I consider the problem of learning French.
<b>undertake</b>	I'm going to take it upon myself to learn French for all of us, maybe because they've left it to me to be the family translator.
<b>venture</b>	I'm going to work to learn French, even if some of my friends doubt I'll be successful.

**CURED!**

*In the **struggle** between the stone and the water, in time, the water wins.*

CHINESE PROVERB

# use

PART OF SPEECH *verb*DEFINITION *to employ for some purpose; to put into service*

## cures for the common word

accept  
adopt  
**apply**  
bestow  
capitalize  
consume  
control  
do with  
**draw on**  
**employ**  
exercise  
exert

exhaust  
expend  
**exploit**  
govern  
handle  
make do  
make use  
make with  
manage  
manipulate  
operate  
play on

ply  
practice  
put forth  
regulate  
relate  
run  
run through  
spend  
utilize  
waste  
**wield**  
work

## CURED!

*Under Capitalism, man **exploits** man. Under Communism, it's exactly the opposite.*

JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

Mr. and Mrs. Doors **use** their influence when fund-raising.

We'd like to think their influence is used in a good way, but we can't be sure in this sentence, whereas the alternatives tell us more about their intentions.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *use*:

Mr. and Mrs. Doors \_\_\_\_\_ their influence when fund-raising.

<b>apply</b>	Their intention is to use their influence in a positive way when engaging with potential donors, though <i>apply</i> can have somewhat of a negative connotation.
<b>draw on</b>	They consider their influence a source to encourage donors—perhaps offering something in exchange for donations.
<b>employ</b>	They consider their influence a tool to achieve their goal.
<b>exercise</b>	They are putting their influence to use to have a desired effect.
<b>exert</b>	The implication when choosing <i>exert</i> is that they may be using their influence to try to force donors to contribute.
<b>exploit</b>	There's no doubt when choosing <i>exploit</i> that they are using their influence selfishly for their own ends.
<b>wield</b>	It's for a good cause, but they're exercising their power in a dominating way.

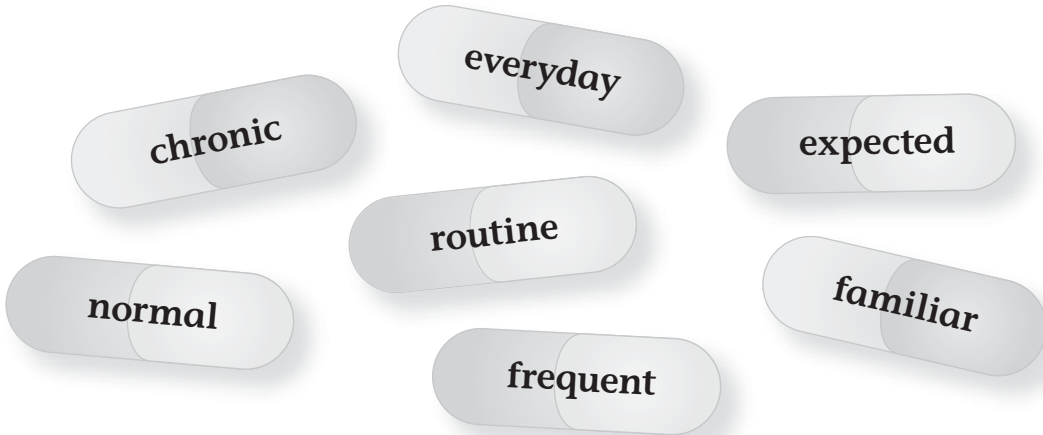
**CURED!**

*The less people know about what is really going on, the easier it is to **wield** power and authority.*

CHARLES, PRINCE OF WALES

## usual

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*  
 DEFINITION *commonplace; everyday*

*cures for the common word*

accepted  
 accustomed  
 average  
**chronic**  
 commonplace  
 constant  
 conventional  
 current  
 customary  
**everyday**  
**expected**  
**familiar**  
 fixed

**frequent**  
 garden variety  
 general  
 grind  
 groove  
 habitual  
 mainstream  
 matter-of-course  
 natural  
**normal**  
 ordinary  
 plain  
 prevailing

prevalent  
 quotidian  
 regular  
 rife  
**routine**  
 so-so  
 standard  
 stock  
 typical  
 unremarkable  
 vanilla  
 wonted  
 workaday

**CURED!**

*Romance is the glamour which turns the dust of **everyday** life into a golden haze.*

ELINOR GLYN

DIAGNOSIS *vague*

We discussed the **usual** problems at the meeting.

There's no way to tell from the use of *usual* in this sentence whether the problems are new or recurring, daunting or manageable.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *usual*:

We discussed the \_\_\_\_\_ problems at the meeting.

<b>chronic</b>	They are continuing and recurring problems we've been discussing for a long time.
<b>everyday</b>	They are problems that occur on a very regular basis.
<b>expected</b>	They are problems we considered were likely or probable to occur.
<b>familiar</b>	They are problems that are commonly known or seen.
<b>frequent</b>	They are problems that occur either quite often or at close intervals.
<b>normal</b>	The problems are the standard or common type.
<b>routine</b>	The problems either are ordinary and unvarying or are often repeated.

**CURED!**

No one realizes how beautiful it is to travel until he comes home and rests his head on his old, **familiar** pillow.

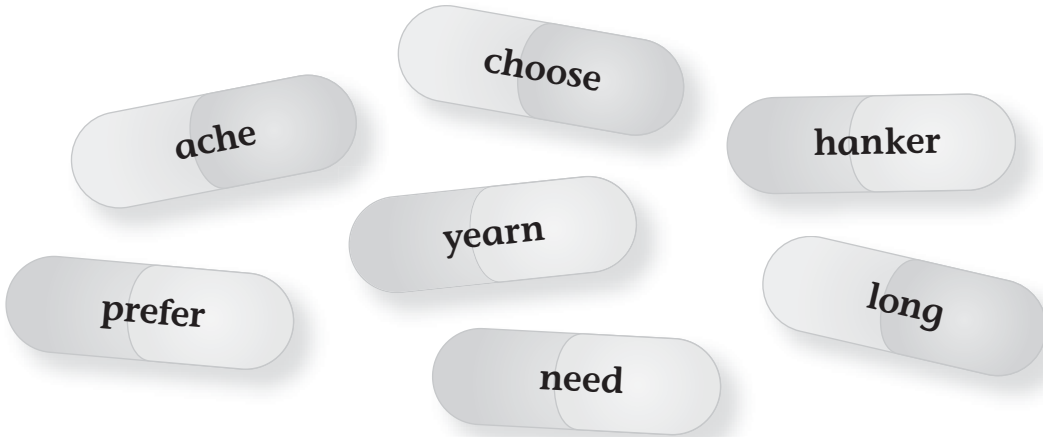
LIN YUTANG

# want

PART OF SPEECH

*verb*

DEFINITION

*to feel a need or a desire for; to wish for*

## cures for the common word

**ache**

aspire

be greedy

**choose**

covet

crave

cream for

desiderate

die over

fancy

**hanker**

have ambition

hunger

incline toward

itch for

lech for

**long**

lust

**need**

pine

**prefer**

require

spoil for

thirst

wish

**yearn**

yen for

## CURED!

The last of the human freedoms is to **choose** one's attitude in any given set of circumstances.

VIKTOR E. FRANKL

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

I **want** to get away from all computers and phones this weekend.

It's time for a break from technology, but *want* doesn't give a clear enough idea of the degree of my get-away urgency.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *want*:

I \_\_\_\_\_ to get away from all computers and phones this weekend.

<b>ache</b>	I'm very eager to get away; in fact, the thought of not getting away is painful.
<b>choose</b>	I have a number of possibilities for what to do this weekend, and I pick getting away.
<b>hanker</b>	I have a restless longing to get away.
<b>long</b>	I have a heartfelt desire, stronger than hoping, to get away, but for this weekend, it's probably beyond my reach.
<b>need</b>	This is beyond a wish—I require relief!
<b>prefer</b>	If given a choice for this weekend, I'd select going away.
<b>yearn</b>	I have such a strong and earnest desire to get away, I'm practically dreaming of it.

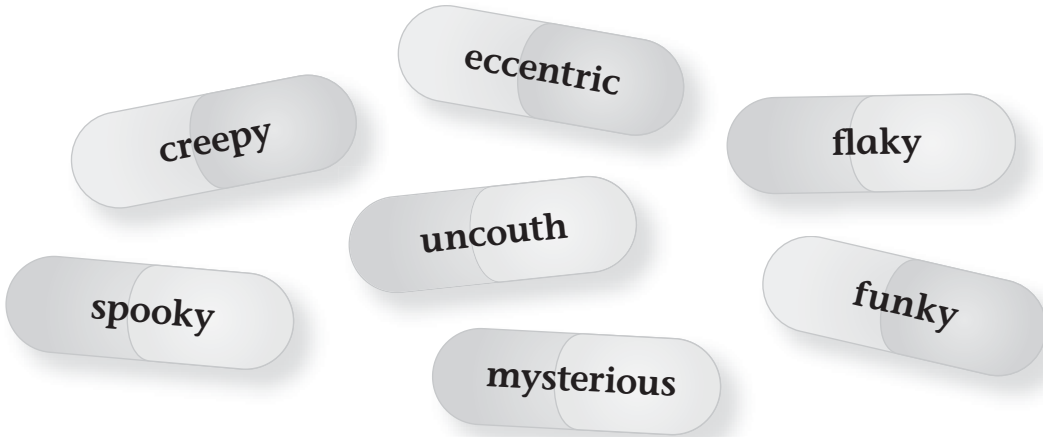
**CURED!**

*After four years at the United Nations I sometimes **yearn** for the peace and tranquillity of a political convention.*

ADLAI E. STEVENSON

# weird

PART OF SPEECH *adjective*  
 DEFINITION *of a strikingly odd or unusual character, strange*



## cures for the common word

awful  
**creepy**  
 curious  
 dreadful  
**eccentric**  
 eerie  
 far-out  
**flaky**  
 freaky  
**funky**  
 ghastly  
 ghostly

grotesque  
 haunting  
 horrific  
 kinky  
 kooky  
 magical  
**mysterious**  
 occult  
 odd  
 oddball  
 ominous  
 outlandish

peculiar  
 preternatural  
 queer  
 secret  
 singular  
**spooky**  
 strange  
 supernatural  
 uncanny  
**uncouth**  
 unearthly  
 unnatural

## CURED!

*That so few now dare to be **eccentric** marks the chief danger of the time.*

JOHN STUART MILL



DIAGNOSIS *vague*

I just met my **weird** new neighbors.

We know *weird* indicates that the neighbors are out of the ordinary, but we're not sure in what way or if *weird* here means they're good, bad, or neither—just different.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *weird*:

I just met my \_\_\_\_\_ new neighbors.

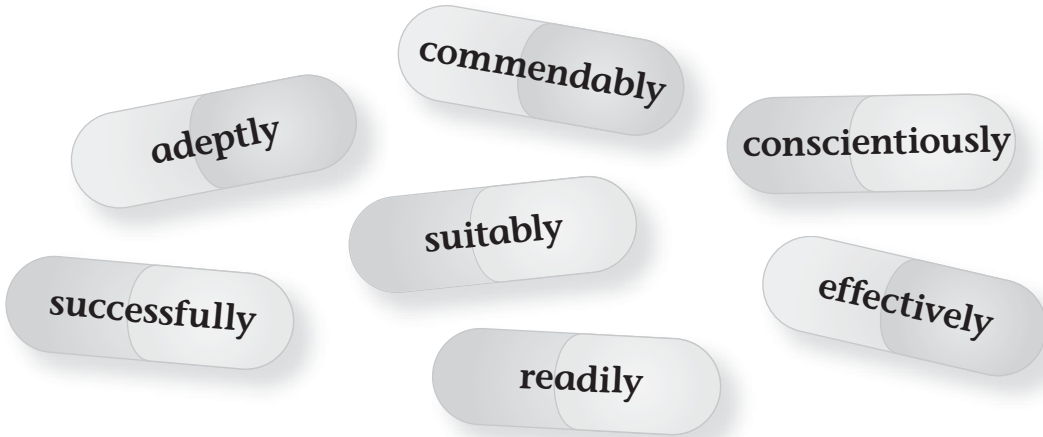
<b>creepy</b>	My neighbors give me a sensation of uneasiness or fear or seem annoyingly unpleasant.
<b>eccentric</b>	The neighbors' behavior is a bit odd and unconventional, departing from an established "norm."
<b>flaky</b>	My neighbors are nice enough but not very reliable.
<b>funky</b>	They're unconventional but in a modish, humorous, tongue-in-cheek way.
<b>mysterious</b>	There's something about the neighbors that seems to elude explanation, leaving me wondering and wanting to find out more.
<b>spooky</b>	Ooh, these people are a little scary.
<b>uncouth</b>	My neighbors' habits are unrefined, to say the least.

**CURED!**

*The most beautiful thing we can experience is the **mysterious**. It is the source of all art and science.*

ALBERT EINSTEIN

# well

PART OF SPEECH *adverb*DEFINITION *in a good, proper, commendable, or satisfactory manner; excellently; skillfully*

## cures for the common word

ably  
accurately  
**adeptly**  
adequately  
admirably  
agreeably  
attentively  
capably  
capitally  
carefully  
closely  
**commendably**  
competently  
completely

**conscientiously**  
correctly  
**effectively**  
efficiently  
effortlessly  
excellently  
expertly  
famously  
favorably  
fully  
irreproachably  
nicely  
pleasantly  
proficiently

profoundly  
properly  
**readily**  
rightly  
satisfactorily  
skillfully  
smoothly  
soundly  
splendidly  
strongly  
**successfully**  
**suitably**  
thoroughly  
with skill

## CURED!

*People will accept your ideas much more **readily** if you tell them Benjamin Franklin said it first.*

DAVID H. COMINS

DIAGNOSIS *limiting*

For a few months, the conservatives and the liberals worked **well** together.

Though it's clearly a positive way they were working together, *well* doesn't tell us what we consider good about this accomplishment, nor does it tell us much about what made their cooperation possible.

## *powerful remedies*

Substitute an alternative remedy for *well*:

For a few months, the conservatives and the liberals worked \_\_\_\_\_ together.

<b>adeptly</b>	They worked together in a very skilled and expert manner.
<b>commendably</b>	They worked together in a way worthy of special praise.
<b>conscientiously</b>	Guided by and in accordance with the dictates of their consciences, they worked in a principled way.
<b>effectively</b>	They worked together adequately to accomplish the intended or expected result—but probably not much beyond that.
<b>readily</b>	They actually worked together willingly.
<b>successfully</b>	They worked together to a favorable outcome.
<b>suitably</b>	They worked in an appropriate and fitting way.

**CURED!**

*The genius of a good leader is to leave behind him a situation which common sense, without the grace of genius, can deal with **successfully**.*

WALTER LIPPMANN

# Minicapsules

## **absolutely** ADVERB 6

*positively; certainly; having no restriction, exception, or qualification*

actually, categorically, completely, **conclusively**, **consummately**, **decidedly**, decisively, def, definitely, doubtless, **easily**, entirely, exactly, **fully**, ideally, positively, **precisely**, purely, really, right on, straight out, sure enough, surely, thoroughly, truly, unambiguously, **unconditionally**, unquestionably, utterly, wholly

## **activity** NOUN 8

*a specific deed, action, or function*

act, avocation, bag, ball game, bit, deed, endeavor, **enterprise**, entertainment, **exercise**, game, hobby, interest, **job**, labor, occupation, **pastime**, **project**, **pursuit**, racket, scene, scheme, stunt, **task**, undertaking, venture, work

## **affect** VERB 10

*to produce a material influence upon or alteration in*

act on, **alter**, change, disturb, impinge, impress, incline, induce, **influence**, inspire, interest, involve, moderate, **modify**, motivate, move, overcome, perturb, prevail, **prompt**, regard, relate, stir, **sway**, touch, **transform**, **upset**

## **amazing** ADJECTIVE 12

*causing great surprise or sudden wonder*

affecting, **alarming**, astonishing, astounding, **bewildering**, blown away, bowled down, bowled over, dazing, dazzling, **dumbfounding**, **electrifying**, flabbergasting, **impressive**, moving, overwhelming, perplexing, put away, **remarkable**, **shocking**, staggering, startling, striking, stunning, stupefying, touching, unexpected

## **awesome** ADJECTIVE 14

*very impressive; inspiring; terrific, extraordinary*

alarming, astonishing, **awe-inspiring**, awful, beautiful, **breathtaking**, daunting, dreadful, exalted, fabulous, fearful, fearsome, formidable, frantic, frightening, grand, horrifying, **imposing**, **impressive**, intimidating, magnificent, **majestic**, mind-blowing, **moving**, nervous, outstanding, overwhelming, shocking, striking, stunning, stupefying, stupendous, terrible, terrifying, wonderful, **wondrous**

## **bad** ADJECTIVE 16

*of poor or inferior quality; defective; deficient*

abominable, amiss, **atrocious**, awful, bad news, beastly, bottom out, bummer, careless, **cheap**, corrupt, crummy, **defective**, deficient, disagreeable, dissatisfactory, dreadful, erroneous, fallacious, faulty, harmful, imperfect, inadequate, incorrect, **inferior**, injurious, lousy, off, **offensive**, poor, repulsive, rough, sad, skuzzy, **sleazy**, **slipshod**, stinking, substandard, synthetic, unacceptable, unfavorable, unsatisfactory

## **basic** ADJECTIVE 18

*elementary; of, being, or serving as a starting point; fundamental*

basal, beginning, capital, central, **chief**, easy, elemental, **elementary**, **essential**, **foundational**, fundamental, indispensable, inherent, intrinsic, **introductory**, **key**, main, necessary, primary, primitive, **principal**, radical, rudimentary, simplified, substratal, underlying, vital

**beautiful** ADJECTIVE 20

*having qualities that give great pleasure or satisfaction to see, hear, think about; delighting the senses or mind*

**alluring**, **angelic**, appealing, attractive, beauteous, bewitching, charming, classy, comely, cute, dazzling, **delicate**, delightful, divine, **elegant**, enticing, excellent, exquisite, fair, **fascinating**, fine, foxy, good-looking, gorgeous, **graceful**, grand, handsome, ideal, lovely, magnificent, marvelous, pleasing, pretty, radiant, ravishing, refined, resplendent, shapely, splendid, statuesque, **stunning**, sublime, superb, taking, wonderful

**begin** VERB 22

*to perform the first or earliest part of some action; to commence; to start*

activate, actualize, break ground, bring about, cause, **commence**, create, effect, **embark on**, enter on, enter upon, establish, eventuate, found, generate, get going, give impulse, go ahead, go into, impel, inaugurate, induce, **initiate**, instigate, institute, introduce, **launch**, lead, make, make active, motivate, **mount**, occasion, open, originate, **plunge into**, prepare, produce, set about, set up, trigger, **undertake**

**better** ADJECTIVE 24

*greater in excellence or higher in quality*

bigger, choice, exceeding, **exceptional**, finer, fitter, greater, **higher quality**, improved, larger, **more appropriate**, more desirable, more fitting, more select, more suitable, more useful, more valuable, **preferable**, preferred, prominent, **sophisticated**, **superior**, surpassing, **worthier**

**big** ADJECTIVE 26

*large, as in size, height, width, or amount*

ample, brimming, bulky, burly, capacious, chock-full, **colossal**, commodious, considerable, copious, enormous, **extensive**, fat, full, gigantic, heavy-duty, heavyweight, **hefty**, huge, hulking, humungous, husky, immense, jumbo, king-sized, mammoth, **massive**, monster, oversize, ponderous, **prodigious**, roomy, sizable, spacious, strapping, stuffed, **substantial**, thundering, vast, voluminous, wallowing, **whopping**

**boring** ADJECTIVE 28

*uninteresting and tiresome; dull*

bomb, bromidic, characterless, colorless, commonplace, drab, drag, drudging, dull, flat, ho-hum, humdrum, insipid, **interminable**, irksome, lifeless, **monotonous**, platitudinous, plebeian, prosaic, repetitious, routine, spiritless, **stale**, stereotypical, **stodgy**, stuffy, stupid, tame, **tedious**, threadbare, tiresome, tiring, trite, **unexciting**, vapid, **wearisome**, well-worn, zero

**bring** VERB 30

*to carry, convey, lead, or cause to go along to another place*

**accompany**, attend, back, bear, carry, **chaperone**, companion, conduct, consort, convey, deliver, **escort**, fetch, gather, guide, heel, hump, import, **lead**, lug, pack, pick up, piggyback, ride, **schlepp**, shoulder, take, take along, tote, transfer, **transport**, truck, **usher**

**certain** ADJECTIVE 32

*confident; free from doubt or reservation*

absolute, **assured**, believing, calm, clear, **conclusive**, convinced, definite, **evident**, firm, **fixed**, guaranteed, incontrovertible, indubitable, infallible, **irrefutable**, known, plain, positive, predestined, real, **reliable**, safe, sanguine, secure, set, sound, sure, true, **unambiguous**, undeniable, unequivocal, unerring, unmistakable, unquestionable, verifiable

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**change** VERB 34

*to make different from what it is or from what it would be if left alone*

accommodate, **adapt**, **adjust**, alter, alternate, commute, convert, **diminish**, diverge, diversify, evolve, fluctuate, make innovations, make over, **moderate**, **modify**, modulate, mutate, naturalize, recondition, redo, reform, regenerate, remake, remodel, renovate, **reorganize**, replace, resolve, restyle, revolutionize, shape, shift, substitute, tamper with, transfigure, transform, translate, transmute, transpose, turn, vacillate, **vary**, veer, warp

**choose** VERB 36

*to select from a number of possible alternatives; to decide on and pick out*

**accept**, adopt, appoint, cast, co-opt, crave, cull, decide on, designate, desire, determine, **elect**, **embrace**, excerpt, extract, fancy, **favor**, finger, fix on, glean, **identify**, judge, love, name, **nominate**, opt for, predestine, **prefer**, see fit, select, set aside, settle upon, sift out, single out, slot, sort, tag, take, tap, want, weigh, will, winnow, wish, wish for

**common** ADJECTIVE 38

*ordinary; widespread; general; of frequent occurrence; usual; familiar*

accepted, average, banal, bourgeois, casual, characteristic, colloquial, **conventional**, current, customary, daily, everyday, **familiar**, frequent, general, habitual, hackneyed, homely, humdrum, informal, **mediocre**, monotonous, natural, obscure, passable, plain, prevailing, prevalent, prosaic, regular, **routine**, run-of-the-mill, **simple**, **stale**, standard, stereotypical, **stock**, trite, typical, undistinguished, universal, unvaried, usual, wearisome, workaday

**correct** ADJECTIVE 40

*free from error; especially conforming to fact or truth*

actual, amen, **appropriate**, equitable, exact, **factual**, faithful, faultless, flawless, for sure, impeccable, just, **legitimate**, nice, OK, **on target**, perfect, **precise**, **proper**, regular, right, righteous, rigorous, stone, strict, true, **undistorted**, unmistaken, veracious, veridical

**correct** VERB 42

*to set or make true, accurate, or right; to remove the errors or faults from*

alter, ameliorate, amend, better, change, **clean up**, cure, debug, do over, doctor, **edit**, emend, fiddle with, fix up, go over, help, improve, launder, make over, make right, mend, pay dues, pick up, **polish**, reclaim, reconstruct, rectify, redress, reform, regulate, remedy, remodel, **reorganize**, repair, retouch, **review**, **revise**, right, set right, set straight, shape up, straighten out, **touch up**, turn around, upgrade

**decent** ADJECTIVE 44

*respectable; suitable; conforming to a recognized standard of good taste*

adequate, **appropriate**, approved, **becoming**, befitting, **chaste**, clean, comely, conforming, continent, correct, decorous, delicate, ethical, fair, fit, fitting, good, honest, honorable, **immaculate**, mannerly, modest, moral, nice, noble, presentable, **proper**, prudent, pure, reserved, **respectable**, right, spotless, stainless, standard, straight, **suitable**, trustworthy, unblemished, undefiled, untarnished, upright, virtuous, worthy

**develop** VERB 46

*to bring out the capabilities or possibilities of; to cause to grow or expand*

actualize, advance, amplify, **augment**, beautify, broaden, build up, cultivate, deepen, dilate, elaborate, enlarge, **enrich**, evolve, exploit, extend, finish, heighten, **improve**, intensify, **lengthen**, magnify, materialize, **perfect**, polish, promote, realize, **refine**, **strengthen**, stretch, unfold, widen, work out

**difficult** ADJECTIVE 48*not easily or readily done*

ambitious, **arduous**, **backbreaking**, bothersome, burdensome, **challenging**, crucial, **demanding**, effortful, exacting, formidable, galling, gargantuan, hard, hard-won, heavy, **herculean**, immense, **intricate**, irritating, labored, **laborious**, onerous, painful, problem, problematic, prohibitive, rigid, severe, strenuous, titanic, toilsome, tough, troublesome, trying, unyielding, uphill, upstream, wearisome

**difficult** ADJECTIVE 50*complicated; hard to comprehend*

abstract, abstruse, baffling, bewildering, **complex**, confounding, confusing, dark, deep, delicate, **enigmatic**, enigmatical, **entangled**, esoteric, formidable, hard, hidden, inexplicable, intricate, involved, knotty, labyrinthine, loose, meandering, **mysterious**, mystifying, obscure, obstinate, paradoxical, **perplexing**, **problematical**, profound, puzzling, rambling, subtle, tangled, **thorny**, ticklish, troublesome, unclear, unfathomable, unintelligible

**direct** ADJECTIVE 52*honest; straightforward; frank; candid*

absolute, bald, **blunt**, **candid**, categorical, downright, **explicit**, express, **forthright**, frank, genuine, guileless, matter-of-fact, open, **outspoken**, plain, plain-spoken, point-blank, sincere, straight, straightforward, truthful, **unambiguous**, unconcealed, undisguised, **unequivocal**, unreserved

**do** VERB 54*to perform, execute, carry out*

accomplish, achieve, act, **arrange**, bring about, cause, complete, conclude, cook, **create**, determine, discharge, effect, end, engage in, **execute**, finish, fix, fulfill, get ready, look after, make, make ready, move, operate, **organize**, perform, perk, **prepare**, **produce**, pull off, see to, succeed, take on, transact, **undertake**, wind up, work, wrap up

**easy** ADJECTIVE 56*capable of being accomplished or acquired with ease; posing no difficulty*

**accessible**, apparent, basic, child's play, cinch, clear, comfortable, **effortless**, **elementary**, evident, facile, inconsiderable, light, little, **manageable**, manifest, mere, natural, no bother, no problem, no sweat, no trouble, **obvious**, **painless**, paltry, picnic, plain, plain sailing, pleasant, pushover, relaxed, royal, simple, slight, smooth, snap, straightforward, **uncomplicated**, undemanding, uninvolved, untroublesome, yielding

**effective** ADJECTIVE 58*producing the intended or expected result; adequate to accomplish a purpose*

able, active, adequate, capable, cogent, **compelling**, competent, **convincing**, direct, effectual, efficacious, **efficient**, emphatic, energetic, **forceful**, forcible, impressive, live, moving, operative, **persuasive**, potent, **powerful**, powerhouse, **practical**, producing, resultant, serviceable, serving, sound, striking, successful, sufficient, telling, trenchant, useful, valid, virtuous, yielding

**emphasize** VERB 60*to lay stress upon; to single out as important*

accent, **accentuate**, affirm, **articulate**, assert, charge, **dramatize**, enlarge, enunciate, headline, **highlight**, impress, indicate, insist on, italicize, maintain, make clear, mark, pinpoint, play up, point out, press, prioritize, pronounce, punctuate, **reiterate**, repeat, rub in, spot, **spotlight**, underline, **underscore**, weight

## 210 Minicapsules

**end** VERB 62

*to come to a conclusion; to terminate or cease*

abolish, abort, accomplish, achieve, **break off**, break up, call off, cease, close, close out, complete, **conclude**, consummate, crown, culminate, cut short, **delay**, determine, discontinue, dispose of, dissolve, drop, expire, **finish**, get done, give up, halt, **interrupt**, perorate, **postpone**, quit, relinquish, **resolve**, settle, sew up, shut down, stop, terminate, ultimate, wind up, wrap, wrap up

**energy** NOUN 64

*the capacity for vigorous activity; abundant available power*

animation, ardor, birr, dash, **drive**, dynamism, élan, **endurance**, enterprise, exertion, fire, force, forcefulness, fortitude, get-up-and-go, go, initiative, **intensity**, juice, life, **liveliness**, might, moxie, muscle, pep, **pizzazz**, pluck, potency, power, puissance, punch, spirit, spontaneity, **stamina**, steam, strength, toughness, tuck, vehemence, verve, vigor, vim, vitality, **zeal**, zest

**enjoy** VERB 66

*to experience joy or satisfaction from; to take pleasure in*

**adore**, **appreciate**, be entertained, be pleased, **delight in**, dig, dote on, drink in, eat up, fancy, flip for, flip over, funk, go, groove on, have fun, like, **love**, **luxuriate in**, mind, pleasure in, rejoice in, **relish**, revel in, **savor**, savvy, take to

**enough** ADJECTIVE 68

*adequate for the want or need; sufficient for the purpose or to satisfy desire*

abundant, acceptable, **adequate**, **ample**, bellyful, bounteous, bountiful, comfortable, competent, complete, **copious**, decent, fed up, full, had it, last straw, lavish, plenteous, **plentiful**, replete, satisfactory, satisfying, **sufficient**, sufficing, **suitable**, tolerable, **unlimited**

**excellent** ADJECTIVE 70

*of the highest or finest quality; exceptionally good of its kind*

accomplished, admirable, attractive, champion, choice, desirable, distinctive, **distinguished**, estimable, exceptional, **exemplary**, exquisite, fine, first, first-class, first-rate, good, great, high, **incomparable**, **invaluable**, magnificent, meritorious, **notable**, noted, outstanding, peerless, premium, priceless, prime, remarkable, select, **skillful**, splendid, sterling, striking, superb, superior, superlative, supreme, **tiptop**, top-notch, transcendent, unsurpassed, wonderful

**exciting** ADJECTIVE 72

*producing excitement or strong feeling in; stirring; thrilling; exhilarating*

animating, appealing, arousing, **arresting**, **astonishing**, bracing, breathtaking, dangerous, **dramatic**, **electrifying**, exhilarant, eye-popping, far-out, fine, flashy, heady, hectic, impelling, impressive, interesting, **intoxicating**, intriguing, lively, melodramatic, mind-blowing, moving, neat, overpowering, overwhelming, **provocative**, racy, rip-roaring, rousing, sensational, showy, spine-tingling, stimulating, **stirring**, thrilling, titillating, wild, zestful

**fast** ADJECTIVE 74

*quick; swift; moving or able to move, operate, function, or take effect quickly*

accelerated, active, **agile**, breakneck, **brisk**, chop-chop, **dashing**, double time, electric, **expeditious**, expeditive, flashing, fleet, fleeting, flying, hair-trigger, **hasty**, hot, hurried, hypersonic, instant, lickety-split, like crazy, mercurial, **nimble**, PDQ, posthaste, presto, pronto, quick, racing, rapid, ready, screamin', snap, snappy, **swift**, velocious, winged



**feel** VERB 76*to perceive or examine by touch*

caress, clasp, **clutch**, explore, finger, fondle, frisk, **fumble**, grapple, grasp, grip, **grope**, **handle**, manipulate, maul, palm, palpate, paw, perceive, pinch, ply, poke, press, **sense**, **squeeze**, stroke, test, thumb, tickle, **touch**, try, twiddle, wield

**fill** VERB 78*to occupy to the full capacity*

block, brim over, bulge out, charge, choke, **clog**, close, congest, **cram**, crowd, distend, fulfill, furnish, glut, gorge, heap, impregnate, inflate, jam-pack, lade, load, meet, occupy, overflow, **pack**, permeate, pervade, plug, pump up, ram, replenish, sate, satiate, satisfy, **saturate**, shoal, **stock**, store, stretch, stuff, suffuse, **supply**, swell, take up, **top off**

**final** ADJECTIVE 80*conclusive or decisive; coming to the end; last in place, order, or time*

absolute, **bottom-line**, **closing**, **concluding**, crowning, decided, decisive, definite, definitive, determinate, determinative, ending, **eventual**, finished, finishing, hindmost, incontrovertible, irrefutable, **irrevocable**, **last-minute**, latest, latter, settled, supreme, swan song, terminal, terminating, **ultimate**, unanswerable, unappealable

**fine** ADJECTIVE 82*of superior or best quality; excellent*

accomplished, aces, **admirable**, attractive, beautiful, capital, choice, dandy, **elegant**, exceptional, expensive, exquisite, **fashionable**, first-class, **first-rate**, five-star, good-looking, great, handsome, lovely, magnificent, ornate, outstanding, pleasant, rare, **refined**, select, showy, skillful, **smart**, spiffy, splendid, **striking**, subtle, superior, supreme, top-notch, well-made, wicked

**finish** VERB 84*to get done*

accomplish, achieve, bag it, **break up**, carry through, cease, chuck, clinch, close, complete, conclude, consume, cool it, crown, culminate, deplete, determine, discharge, end, execute, exhaust, **finalize**, **fold**, fulfill, **halt**, make, mop up, perfect, round off, scratch, **scrub**, settle, sew up, **shut down**, shutter, stop, terminate, wrap, **wrap up**

**funny** ADJECTIVE 86*humorous; causing amusement or laughter; comical*

absurd, **amusing**, antic, a scream, **bizarre**, blithe, capricious, **clever**, comical, diverting, droll, entertaining, facetious, farcical, gay, good-humored, hilarious, humorous, **hysterical**, jocular, joking, jolly, killing, knee-slapping, laughable, **ludicrous**, merry, mirthful, playful, priceless, rich, ridiculous, riotous, risible, side-splitting, silly, slapstick, sportive, uncommon, unusual, **whimsical**, **witty**

**get** VERB 88*to come into possession or use of; to acquire as a result of action or effort*

access, accomplish, achieve, acquire, annex, attain, bag, build up, buy out, **capture**, clean up, come by, cop, draw, earn, educate, **elicit**, evoke, extort, **extract**, fetch, **gain**, **glean**, grab, inherit, land, lock up, make, net, obtain, parlay, pick up, **procure**, pull, rack up, realize, reap, receive, score, **secure**, snag, snap up, take, wangle, win

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**give** VERB 90*to impart or communicate*

accord, **administer**, ante up, award, bequeath, **bestow**, cede, commit, **confer**, consign, convey, deed, deliver, dish out, **dispense**, distribute, **dole out**, donate, endow, entrust, fork over, furnish, grant, hand, **impart**, lease, let have, parcel out, part with, pass out, permit, pony up, present, **provide**, relinquish, remit, sell, shell out, subsidize, supply, throw in, transfer, transmit, vouchsafe, will

**go** VERB 92*to move or proceed, especially to or from something*

abscond, advance, approach, beat it, bug out, **cruise**, decamp, depart, **escape**, exit, fare, flee, fly, **get away**, get going, **hie**, hightail, **journey**, lam, leave, light out, mosey, move, pass, **proceed**, progress, pull out, push on, quit, repair, **retire**, run away, shove off, skip out, split, take flight, take off, tool, travel, vamoose, wend, withdraw

**good** ADJECTIVE 94*pleasant; enjoyable*

acceptable, ace, admirable, agreeable, bully, capital, choice, **commendable**, competent, congenial, deluxe, excellent, exceptional, favorable, first-class, functional, **gratifying**, great, **honorable**, marvelous, nice, pleasing, positive, precious, prime, reputable, **satisfying**, select, serviceable, shipshape, sound, spanking, splendid, sterling, stupendous, super, superb, superior, tip-top, **valuable**, **welcome**, **wonderful**

**good** ADJECTIVE 96*having the qualities that are desirable or distinguishing in a particular thing; skilled*

able, **accomplished**, adept, adroit, au fait, capable, clever, competent, dexterous, efficient, **experienced**, expert, first-rate, **masterful**, proficient, proper, qualified, reliable, **responsible**, satisfactory, serviceable, **skillful**, suitable, suited, **talented**, thorough, trained, **trustworthy**, useful, wicked

**great** ADJECTIVE 98*important; eminent; distinguished; remarkable or outstanding*

august, capital, celebrated, chief, **commanding**, dignified, **distinguished**, eminent, exalted, excellent, famous, glorious, grand, **heroic**, **highly regarded**, honorable, **idealistic**, illustrious, impressive, leading, lofty, lordly, **magnanimous**, major, noble, notable, noted, outstanding, paramount, primary, principal, prominent, puissant, regal, remarkable, renowned, royal, stately, sublime, superior, superlative, **talented**

**grow** VERB 100*to expand or increase gradually by concerted effort*

abound, **advance**, age, amplify, arise, augment, breed, **build**, **burgeon**, cultivate, **develop**, dilate, enlarge, **expand**, extend, fill out, **flourish**, gain, germinate, heighten, increase, issue, luxuriate, mature, **mature**, mount, multiply, originate, produce, propagate, pullulate, raise, ripen, rise, shoot, spread, sprout, stem, stretch, swell, thicken, thrive, turn, wax, widen

**happy** ADJECTIVE 102*enjoying or showing joy or pleasure or good fortune*

blessed, blissful, blithe, captivated, **cheerful**, chipper, content, convivial, delighted, **delightful**, ecstatic, elated, exultant, flying high, gay, glad, gleeful, gratified, hopped up, intoxicated, jolly, joyous, jubilant, laughing, light, **lively**, merry, **mirthful**, overjoyed, **peaceful**, peppy, perky, **playful**, pleasant, pleased, satisfied, sparkling, sunny, thrilled, tickled pink, up, **upbeat**

**hard** ADJECTIVE 104*difficult to do or accomplish; fatiguing; troublesome*

**arduous**, backbreaking, ball-breaking, bothersome, burdensome, complex, **complicated**, **demanding**, distressing, exacting, **exhausting**, fatiguing, **formidable**, grinding, hairy, harsh, heavy, herculean, intricate, involved, irksome, knotty, laborious, mean, merciless, murderous, onerous, operose, rigorous, rough, **rugged**, scabrous, serious, severe, slavish, sticky, **strenuous**, terrible, tiring, toilsome, tough, troublesome, unsparing, wearing, wearisome

**help** VERB 106*to give aid; to be of service or advantage; to assist*

abet, accommodate, advocate, aid, **assist**, back, ballyhoo, **befriend**, benefit, **bolster**, boost, buck up, cheer, cooperate, **encourage**, endorse, further, intercede, maintain, open doors, patronize, plug, promote, prop, puff, push, relieve, root for, sanction, save, second, serve, **stand by**, stimulate, stump for, succor, **support**, **sustain**, uphold

**important** ADJECTIVE 108*substantial; of much or great significance or consequence*

big-league, chief, considerable, conspicuous, critical, crucial, decisive, earnest, **essential**, exceptional, exigent, extensive, far-reaching, foremost, front-page, grave, great, heavy, **imperative**, importunate, **influential**, large, marked, material, **meaningful**, momentous, notable, of note, of substance, **paramount**, ponderous, pressing, primary, principal, **relevant**, salient, serious, signal, **significant**, something, standout, substantial, urgent, vital, weighty

**interesting** ADJECTIVE 110*arousing the curiosity or engaging the attention*

**absorbing**, affecting, alluring, **amusing**, arresting, captivating, charismatic, **compelling**, curious, delightful, elegant, enchanting, engaging, engrossing, entertaining, enthralling, entrancing, exceptional, exotic, **fascinating**, gracious, gripping, impressive, inspiring, **intriguing**, inviting, magnetic, pleasing, pleasurable, provocative, refreshing, **riveting**, **stimulating**, stirring, striking, suspicious, thought-provoking, unusual, winning

**keep** VERB 112*to hold or retain in one's possession*

**accumulate**, **amass**, cache, care for, carry, conduct, conserve, control, **deposit**, detain, direct, enjoy, garner, grasp, grip, have, **heap**, hold back, **maintain**, manage, own, pile, place, possess, preserve, put up, reserve, retain, **save**, stack, stock, **store**, withhold

**kind** ADJECTIVE 114*of a good or benevolent nature or disposition*

**affectionate**, all heart, altruistic, **amiable**, amicable, beneficent, benevolent, big, bounteous, charitable, clement, **compassionate**, congenial, considerate, cordial, courteous, **friendly**, **generous**, gentle, good-hearted, gracious, humane, humanitarian, **indulgent**, kindhearted, kindly, lenient, loving, mild, neighborly, **obliging**, philanthropic, propitious, softhearted, sympathetic, tenderhearted, thoughtful, tolerant, understanding

**know** VERB 116*to perceive or understand as fact or truth; to apprehend clearly and with certainty*

apperceive, **appreciate**, apprehend, be acquainted, be cognizant, be informed, be read, be versed, cognize, **comprehend**, differentiate, **discern**, discriminate, distinguish, experience, **fathom**, feel certain, grasp, have, **ken**, **learn**, **notice**, perceive, realize, recognize, see, understand

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**leave** VERB 118

*to depart from permanently; to quit*

**abandon**, abscond, break away, cast off, clear out, cut out, decamp, defect, **desert**, disappear, **ditch**, embark, emigrate, **escape**, **exit**, **flee**, flit, fly, **forsake**, go away, go forth, head out, migrate, move out, part, pull out, push off, quit, relinquish, retire, ride off, run along, sally, scam, set out, slip out, split, step down, take leave, take off, vacate, vamoose, vanish, walk out, withdraw

**look** NOUN 120

*the way in which a person or thing appears to the eye or to the mind*

**air**, aspect, attitude, **bearing**, cast, character, complexion, **countenance**, **demeanor**, **effect**, expression, face, fashion, feature, form, guise, image, **manner**, **mien**, mug, physiognomy, posture, presence, seeming, semblance, shape, visage

**love** NOUN 122

*a profoundly tender, passionate affection for another person or an object*

adulation, **affection**, allegiance, amity, amour, **appreciation**, ardor, attachment, crush, delight, **devotion**, emotion, enchantment, enjoyment, fervor, fidelity, fondness, friendship, hankering, idolatry, inclination, **infatuation**, involvement, liking, **lust**, partiality, passion, rapture, **regard**, relish, respect, sentiment, soft spot, taste, tenderness, weakness, **worship**, yearning, zeal

**main** ADJECTIVE 124

*chief in size, extent, or importance; principal; leading*

capital, cardinal, central, chief, controlling, critical, crucial, **dominant**, essential, first, **foremost**, **fundamental**, head, **leading**, major, **necessary**, **outstanding**, paramount, particular, predominant, preeminent, premier, prevailing, primary, prime, special, star, stellar, supreme, **vital**

**make** VERB 126

*to cause to exist or happen; to bring about; to create*

accomplish, adjust, **arrange**, **assemble**, beget, brew, **bring about**, **build**, cause, compile, compose, conceive, constitute, construct, cook up, dream up, effect, engender, fabricate, fashion, father, forge, form, frame, generate, hatch, initiate, **invent**, knock out, manufacture, mold, occasion, originate, parent, **prepare**, procreate, produce, put together, secure, shape, sire, spawn, synthesize, **throw together**, whip up

**mean** ADJECTIVE 128

*hostile, offensive, selfish, or unaccommodating; nasty; malicious*

bad-tempered, bitchy, callous, **cantankerous**, **churlish**, contemptible, **dangerous**, despicable, difficult, dirty, disagreeable, **dishonorable**, **evil**, **formidable**, hard, hard-nosed, ignoble, ill-tempered, infamous, knavish, liverish, lousy, malicious, malign, nasty, perfidious, pesky, rotten, rough, rude, rugged, scurrilous, shameless, sinking, snide, sour, the lowest, treacherous, **troublesome**, ugly, unfriendly, unpleasant, unscrupulous, vexatious, vicious

**more** ADJECTIVE 130

*additional or further; in greater quantity, amount, measure, degree, or number*

added, additional, amassed, another, augmented, bounteous, **deeper**, enhanced, exceeding, **expanded**, extended, extra, farther, **fresh**, further, greater, **heavier**, higher, increased, innumerable, larger, likewise, **major**, massed, new, numerous, other, replenishment, **supplementary**, **wider**

**need** NOUN 132*urgent want, as of something required or wanted*ache, charge, **commitment**, committal, **compulsion**, craving, demand, desire, devoir, **duty**, exigency, extremity, hunger, itch, **longing**, must, **obligation**, occasion, requirement, requisite, right, thirst, urge, **urgency**, use, weakness, **wish****new** ADJECTIVE 134*of recent origin, production, purchase, etc.*dewy, different, dissimilar, distinct, edgy, fashionable, **fresh**, inexperienced, just out, **latest**, **modern**, modernistic, modish, neoteric, newfangled, **novel**, now, original, recent, strange, topical, ultramodern, uncontaminated, **unfamiliar**, **unique**, unknown, unlike, unseasoned, unskilled, unspoiled, untouched, untrained, **untried**, untrodden, unused, unusual, up-to-date, virgin, youthful**next** ADJECTIVE 136*immediately following in time, order, importance, etc.*abutting, **adjacent**, **adjoining**, after, alongside, attached, beside, bordering, close, **closest**, coming, connecting, consecutive, consequent, contiguous, ensuing, **following**, immediate, later, nearby, **nearest**, **neighboring**, proximate, **subsequent**, succeeding, thereafter, touching**nice** ADJECTIVE 138*pleasing and agreeable in nature*admirable, agreeable, amiable, approved, attractive, **becoming**, **charming**, commendable, considerate, copacetic, **cordial**, courteous, **cultured**, decorous, delightful, favorable, friendly, genial, **gentle**, good, **gracious**, helpful, hunky-dory, ingratiating, inviting, kind, kindly, lovely, nifty, obliging, OK, peachy, pleasant, pleasurable, polite, seemly, swell, unpresumptuous, welcome, **well-mannered**, winning, winsome**old** ADJECTIVE 140*having lived or existed for a relatively long time; far advanced in years or life***aged**, ancient, broken down, debilitated, decrepit, deficient, doddering, elderly, enfeebled, exhausted, **experienced**, fossil, geriatric, getting on, gray-haired, grizzled, hoary, impaired, inactive, infirm, **mature**, matured, olden, patriarchal, **seasoned**, senile, **senior**, **skilled**, superannuated, tired, used, venerable, versed, **veteran**, wasted, worn**old** ADJECTIVE 142*obsolete; no longer in general use*aboriginal, age-old, antediluvian, **antiquated**, antique, archaic, bygone, cast-off, crumbling, dated, decayed, démodé, early, erstwhile, **former**, hackneyed, immemorial, late, moth-eaten, of yore, olden, oldfangled, **old-fashioned**, old-time, **onetime**, **original**, outdated, outmoded, passé, past, previous, primeval, **primitive**, primordial, quondam, remote, rusty, stale, superannuated, time-worn, traditional, unfashionable, unoriginal, venerable, **worn-out****open** ADJECTIVE 144*not closed or barred; relatively free of obstructions***accessible**, agape, **airy**, ajar, bare, clear, cleared, dehiscent, disclosed, emptied, expansive, **exposed**, extended, free, gaping, naked, **navigable**, patent, patulous, peeled, revealed, rolling, **spacious**, spread out, stripped, susceptible, unbarred, unblocked, unbolted, unburdened, **uncluttered**, uncovered, unfolded, unfurled, unimpeded, unlocked, **unobstructed**, unsealed, unstopped, vacated, wide, yawning

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**part** NOUN 146

*a portion or division of a whole that is separate or distinct*

**allotment**, apportionment, articulation, bit, branch, chunk, component, constituent, department, detail, division, element, factor, **fraction**, **fragment**, helping, hunk, ingredient, installment, item, limb, lot, measure, member, module, moiety, molecule, organ, **parcel**, particle, piece, portion, quantum, **ration**, scrap, section, **sector**, **segment**, share, side, slice, sliver, splinter, subdivision, unit

**perfect** ADJECTIVE 148

*entirely without any flaws, defects, or shortcomings*

absolute, **accomplished**, aces, adept, beyond compare, blameless, **classical**, **consummate**, crowning, culminating, defectless, excellent, excelling, **experienced**, expert, faultless, finished, flawless, foolproof, ideal, immaculate, **impeccable**, indefectible, masterful, masterly, matchless, paradisiacal, peerless, pure, skilled, skillful, **sound**, splendid, spotless, stainless, sublime, superb, supreme, ten, unblemished, **unequaled**, unmarred, untainted, untarnished, utopian

**piece** NOUN 150

*a separate or limited portion or quantity of something*

**allotment**, bit, **bite**, case, chomp, chunk, cut, division, example, fraction, fragment, **gob**, half, hunk, instance, interest, item, length, lot, **lump**, member, moiety, **morsel**, mouthful, parcel, percentage, portion, quantity, quota, sample, **scrap**, section, segment, share, shred, **slice**, smithereens, snack, specimen

**plain** ADJECTIVE 152

*straightforward; frank or candid*

abrupt, artless, blunt, candid, direct, downright, **forthright**, frank, genuine, **guileless**, **honest**, impolite, **ingenuous**, open, **outspoken**, rude, **sincere**, straight arrow, straightforward, true, unconcealed, undisguised, **unfeigned**, uninhibited, unreserved, unrestricted, unvarnished

**plan** NOUN 154

*a scheme or method of acting, doing, proceeding, making, etc.*

aim, **angle**, animus, arrangement, big picture, contrivance, deal, design, device, disposition, expedient, **game plan**, **gimmick**, idea, intendment, intention, layout, machination, means, **method**, outline, pattern, picture, **platform**, plot, policy, procedure, program, project, proposal, proposition, purpose, scenario, scheme, **stratagem**, **strategy**, suggestion, system, tactic, treatment, undertaking, way

**plan** VERB 156

*to think out; to arrange a method or scheme to accomplish an objective*

arrange, bargain for, block out, blueprint, brainstorm, calculate, concoct, conspire, contemplate, contrive, cook up, **craft**, design, **devise**, draft, **engineer**, figure out, fix to, form, **formulate**, frame, hatch, intrigue, invent, line up, map, **mastermind**, meditate, organize, **outline**, plot, prepare, project, quarterback, ready, reckon on, represent, rough in, scheme, set out, **shape**, sketch, steer, trace, work out

**pleasant** ADJECTIVE 158

*socially acceptable or adept; polite; amiable; agreeable*

**affable**, agreeable, amiable, amusing, bland, charming, **cheerful**, cheery, civilized, **congenial**, convivial, copacetic, cordial, delightful, **diplomatic**, enchanting, **engaging**, enjoyable, fine, friendly, fun, genial, genteel, good-humored, gracious, gratifying, jolly, jovial, kindly, likable, lovely, mild-mannered, nice, obliging, pleasing, pleasurable, **polite**, refreshing, satisfying, social, soft, sweet, **sympathetic**, urbane, welcome

**problem** NOUN 160

*situation, matter, or person that presents perplexity or difficulty*

box, **challenge**, **complication**, count, crunch, **dilemma**, disagreement, dispute, disputed point, doubt, **headache**, hitch, holy mess, hot potato, hot water, **issue**, mess, nut, **obstacle**, pickle, predicament, **quandary**, question, scrape, squeeze, trouble, worryment

**prove** VERB 162

*to establish the truth or genuineness of, as by evidence or argument*

affirm, **analyze**, ascertain, assay, attest, **authenticate**, back, bear out, **certify**, check, confirm, convince, **corroborate**, declare, demonstrate, determine, **document**, end up, establish, evidence, evince, examine, experiment, explain, find, fix, **justify**, make evident, manifest, pan out, result, settle, show, substantiate, sustain, test, testify, trial, try, turn out, uphold, validate, **verify**, warrant, witness

**put** VERB 164

*to move or place anything into or out of a specific location or position*

bring, concenter, concentrate, deposit, **embed**, establish, **fasten**, **fix**, fixate, focus, **insert**, **install**, invest, lay, nail, park, peg, **place**, plank, plant, plop, plunk, quarter, repose, rest, rivet, seat, settle, **situate**, stick

**quick** ADJECTIVE 166

*done, proceeding, or occurring with promptness or rapidity*

**abrupt**, **accelerated**, active, agile, alert, animated, ASAP, breakneck, brief, brisk, cursory, curt, double time, energetic, **expeditious**, expeditive, express, fleet, flying, harefooted, hasty, headlong, **hurried**, **immediate**, impatient, impetuous, instantaneous, keen, lively, mercurial, nimble, **perfunctory**, posthaste, prompt, pronto, rapid, **responsive**, snappy, speedy, spirited, sprightly, spry, sudden, swift, winged

**quick** ADJECTIVE 168

*prompt to understand, learn, etc.*

able, active, **acute**, **adept**, adroit, all there, apt, **astute**, bright, **canny**, capable, clever, **competent**, deft, dexterous, discerning, effective, effectual, intelligent, keen, knowing, nimble-witted, **perceptive**, perspicacious, prompt, quick-witted, ready, **receptive**, savvy, sharp, shrewd, skillful, slick, vigorous, whiz, wise

**ready** ADJECTIVE 170

*prepared or available for service, action, or progress*

accessible, adjusted, all set, anticipating, apt, arranged, at hand, **available**, bagged, completed, convenient, covered, **equipped**, expectant, **fit**, fixed for, **handy**, in line, in order, in place, in position, near, **on call**, on hand, on tap, open to, organized, primed, **qualified**, ripe, set, **waiting**, wired

**regular** ADJECTIVE 172

*usual; normal; customary; recurring at fixed times; periodic*

**approved**, bona fide, classic, common, commonplace, correct, **customary**, **daily**, **established**, everyday, formal, general, habitual, lawful, legitimate, natural, normal, **official**, ordinary, orthodox, prevailing, prevalent, proper, **routine**, run-of-the-mill, sanctioned, standard, time-honored, traditional, **typical**, unexceptional, unvarying, usual



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**short** ADJECTIVE 174

*abridged; brief or concise*

**abbreviated**, aphoristic, bare, boiled-down, breviloquent, **brief**, compendary, compendious, compressed, **concise**, **condensed**, curtailed, curtate, cut short, decreased, decurtate, diminished, epigrammatic, fleeting, laconic, lessened, little, momentary, pithy, pointed, **precise**, sententious, shortened, short-lived, short-term, **succinct**, **summarized**, summary, terse, undersized, unsustained

**simple** ADJECTIVE 176

*clear; easy to understand, deal with, use, etc.*

**child's play**, clean, easy, **effortless**, **elementary**, facile, incomplex, **intelligible**, light, lucid, manageable, mild, no problem, no sweat, picnic, plain, quiet, royal, **self-explanatory**, smooth, snap, **straightforward**, transparent, **uncomplicated**, understandable, uninvolved, unmistakable, unmixed, untroublesome, vanilla

**small** ADJECTIVE 178

*of limited size; of comparatively restricted dimensions; not big*

baby, bantam, bitty, **cramped**, diminutive, **humble**, immature, **inadequate**, inconsequential, inconsiderable, insignificant, **insufficient**, limited, little, meager, microscopic, mini, **miniature**, **minuscule**, minute, **modest**, narrow, paltry, petite, petty, picayune, pint-sized, pitiful, pocket-sized, poor, puny, pygmy, runty, scanty, short, slight, small-scale, stunted, teeny, toy, trifling, trivial, undersized, wee, young

**special** ADJECTIVE 180

*distinguished or different from what is ordinary or usual*

certain, characteristic, chief, choice, defined, definite, designated, determinate, different, **distinctive**, earmarked, **exceptional**, **exclusive**, express, extraordinary, **festive**, first, gala, **important**, individual, limited, main, major, marked, **memorable**, momentous, particular, peculiar, personal, primary, primo, proper, rare, **red-letter**, reserved, restricted, select, set, significant, smashing, specialized, specific, uncommon, unique, unusual

**stay** VERB 182

*to spend some time in a place, in a situation, with a person or group, etc.*

abide, bide, **bunk**, continue, **dally**, delay, dillydally, endure, establish oneself, halt, hang, hang about, hang around, hang in, **hang out**, hover, lag, last, **linger**, **loiter**, nest, outstay, **pause**, perch, procrastinate, remain, reprieve, reside, respite, roost, settle, **sit tight**, sojourn, squat, stand, stay out, stay put, stick around, stop, sweat, sweat it, tarry

**strange** ADJECTIVE 184

*deviating; unusual, extraordinary, or curious; odd*

aberrant, abnormal, astonishing, astounding, atypical, **bizarre**, **curious**, different, **eccentric**, erratic, exceptional, extraordinary, fantastic, far-out, funny, **idiosyncratic**, ignorant, inexperienced, irregular, marvelous, mystifying, new, newfangled, odd, oddball, off, offbeat, **outlandish**, out-of-the-way, peculiar, **perplexing**, **quaint**, queer, rare, remarkable, singular, unaccountable, unaccustomed, uncanny, uncommon, unfamiliar, unheard of, unseasoned, unusual, weird

**take** VERB 186

*to get into one's hold or possession by voluntary action or by force, skill, or artifice*

abduct, accept, **acquire**, arrest, attain, bag, capture, carry off, carve out, catch, choose, clasp, clutch, collar, collect, **earn**, ensnare, entrap, gain possession, gather up, glom, grab, grasp, grip, handle, haul in, have, hold, nab, nail, **obtain**, overtake, pick up, pull in, reach, reap, **receive**, **secure**, **seize**, select, snag, snatch, strike, take in, **win**



**take** VERB 188*to accept, handle, or deal with in a particular way; to endure***abide**, accept, **accommodate**, bear, bear with, **brave**, brook, contain, give access, go, go through, hack, hang in, hang on, hang tough, hold, let in, **live with**, lump it, receive, ride out, stand, stand for, stomach, submit to, suffer, swallow, take it, **tolerate**, undergo, weather, **welcome**, **withstand****thin** ADJECTIVE 190*of relatively slight consistency; scant; not abundant or plentiful*attenuated, beanpole, bony, cadaverous, **delicate**, emaciated, ethereal, featherweight, fine, fragile, **gangly**, gaunt, haggard, lanky, **lean**, lightweight, meager, narrow, peaked, pinched, puny, rangy, rarefied, rawboned, reedy, rickety, **scrawny**, shriveled, skeletal, **skinny**, **slender**, slight, slim, small, spare, spindly, starved, subtle, threadlike, twiggy, undernourished, underweight, **wan**, wasted, wizened**think** VERB 192*to contemplate; to employ one's mind rationally and objectively*analyze, appraise, appreciate, brood, cerebration, chew, cogitate, comprehend, conceive, **consider**, deduce, **deliberate**, estimate, **evaluate**, **examine**, figure out, ideate, imagine, infer, intellectualize, judge, logicalize, meditate, mull, mull over, muse, noodle, **ponder**, rationalize, **reason**, reflect, resolve, ruminate, sort out, **speculate**, stew, study, turn over, weigh**try** VERB 194*to attempt to do or accomplish***aim**, aspire, attack, attempt, **bear down**, buckle down, compete, contend, contest, drive for, **endeavor**, essay, exert oneself, go after, hump it, **labor**, lay to, propose, risk, seek, shoot for, speculate, strive, **struggle**, tackle, **undertake**, **venture**, vie for, work, wrangle**use** VERB 196*to employ for some purpose; put into service*accept, adopt, **apply**, bestow, capitalize, consume, control, do with, **draw on**, **employ**, **exercise**, **exert**, exhaust, expend, **exploit**, govern, handle, make do, make use, make with, manage, manipulate, operate, play on, ply, practice, put forth, regulate, relate, run, run through, spend, utilize, waste, **wield**, work**usual** ADJECTIVE 198*commonplace; everyday*accepted, accustomed, average, **chronic**, commonplace, constant, conventional, current, customary, **everyday**, **expected**, **familiar**, fixed, **frequent**, garden variety, general, grind, groove, habitual, mainstream, matter-of-course, natural, **normal**, ordinary, plain, prevailing, prevalent, quotidian, regular, rife, **routine**, so-so, standard, stock, typical, unremarkable, vanilla, wonted, workaday**want** VERB 200*to feel a need or a desire for; wish for***ache**, aspire, be greedy, **choose**, covet, crave, cream for, desiderate, die over, fancy, **hanker**, have ambition, hunger, incline toward, itch for, lech for, **long**, lust, **need**, pine, **prefer**, require, spoil for, thirst, wish, **yearn**, yen for

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**weird** ADJECTIVE 198

*of a strikingly odd or unusual character, strange*

awful, **creepy**, curious, dreadful, **eccentric**, eerie, far-out, **flaky**, freaky, **funky**, ghastly, ghostly, grotesque, haunting, horrific, kinky, kooky, magical, **mysterious**, occult, odd, oddball, ominous, outlandish, peculiar, preternatural, queer, secret, singular, **spooky**, strange, supernatural, uncanny, **uncouth**, unearthly, unnatural

**well** ADVERB 200

*in a good, proper, commendable, or satisfactory manner; excellently; skillfully*

ably, accurately, **adeptly**, adequately, admirably, agreeably, attentively, capably, capitally, carefully, closely, **commendably**, competently, completely, **conscientiously**, correctly, **effectively**, efficiently, effortlessly, excellently, expertly, famously, favorably, fully, irreproachably, nicely, pleasantly, proficiently, profoundly, properly, **readily**, rightly, satisfactorily, skillfully, smoothly, soundly, splendidly, strongly, **successfully**, **suitably**, thoroughly, with skill